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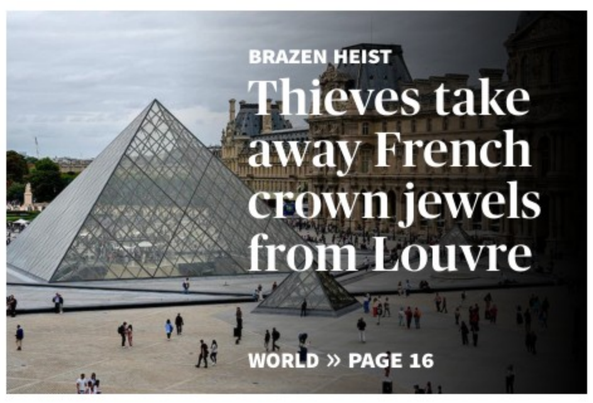
CONGRESS ON UDDHAV-RAJ TIES

**'INDIA bloc will decide on alliance partner'**

NEWS » PAGE 12



BRAZEN HEIST

**Thieves take away French crown jewels from Louvre**

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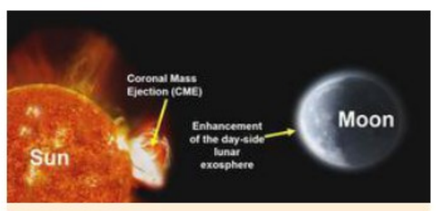


SUN'S IMPACT

**Chandrayaan-2 makes observation of moon**

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DATA POINT

***Record arrests, surrenders dent Maoist network***

*Geographic spread of insurgency has reduced*

OPINION » PAGE 11

TAKING THE LEAD

**Australia cruises past India in the first ODI**

SPORT » PAGE 17

# In Doha, Pakistan and Afghanistan agree on ceasefire

Both sides decide to establish mechanisms for lasting peace, stability, a statement said after talks between Defence Ministers of the two nations

**Press Trust of India**
ISLAMABAD

Afghanistan's Acting Defence Minister Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid and Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif after signing a ceasefire agreement in Doha on Sunday. REUTERS

Pakistan and Afghanistan have agreed to an immediate ceasefire and setting up of "mechanisms" to ensure lasting peace after days of violent clashes along the border that left several soldiers, civilians, and terrorists dead on both sides, officials said on Sunday.

The breakthrough came following negotiations between Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and Afghanistan's Acting Defence Minister Mullah Yaqoob in Doha, facilitated by Qatar and Turkiye, according to a statement issued by Qatar's Foreign Ministry.

"During the negotiation, both sides agreed to an immediate ceasefire and establishment of mechanisms to consolidate lasting peace and stability between the two countries," the statement read.

The two neighbours also agreed to hold "follow-up meetings" in the coming days to ensure the "implementation" and "sustainability" of the truce "in a reliable and sustainable manner" to achieve security and stability in both countries, it said. The development comes amid heightened tensions along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, triggered by cross-border clashes after alleged Pakistani air strikes near Kabul last week.

**'Verifiable action'**

The Doha talks began on Saturday with Pakistan urging the Afghan Taliban authorities to take "verifiable action" against the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which Islamabad accuses of launching cross-border terrorist attacks from Afghan soil.

The Foreign Office, in a statement on Saturday, said Pakistan had stressed the need for the Afghan authorities to honour their "commitments to the international community" and to address Islamabad's "legitimate security concerns" by taking verifiable action against terrorist entities. "Pakistan appreciates the mediation efforts of Qatar and hopes these discussions contribute to peace and stability in the region," it said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

## Israel alleges violation of ceasefire, halts flow of aid

**Associated Press**
TEL AVIV

The fragile ceasefire in Gaza faced its first major test on Sunday as an Israeli security official said the transfer of aid into the territory is halted "until further notice" after a Hamas ceasefire violation, and Israeli forces launched a wave of strikes.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity pending a formal announcement on the halt in aid, which is occurring a little over a week since the start of the ceasefire.

Israel's military earlier on Sunday said its troops came under fire from Hamas militants in southern Gaza. Health officials said at least 19 Palestinians were killed by Israeli strikes in central and southern Gaza.

Israel's military said it had struck dozens of what it called Hamas targets.

An Egyptian official said "round-the-clock" contacts were under way to de-escalate the situation.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu directed the military to take "strong action" against any ceasefire violations, but did not threaten to return to war.

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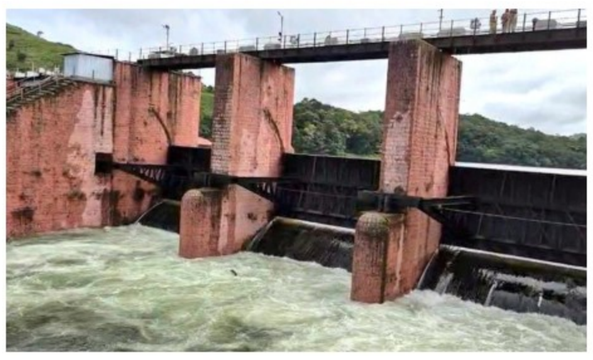
# Idukki, Theni face rain havoc; Mullaperiyar dam kept open

**The Hindu Bureau**
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM/ THENI



With water levels nearing full capacity, surplus water being released from Mullaperiyar dam in Idukki, Kerala. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The intensifying northeast monsoon claimed its first life in Kerala's mountainous Idukki district on Sunday, as intense overnight rain inundated roads and homes, swept away parked vehicles, and triggered mudslides. Traffic came to a standstill, while power lines and mobile phone networks were disrupted.

The intense rain also wreaked havoc in Tamil Nadu's Theni district bordering Idukki, with traffic being affected on the district's Kumily inter-State ghat road due to a mudslide.

With water being released from the Mullaperiyar reservoir into the Periyar river since Saturday, villages along the river in Kerala reported flooding. At 7 p.m. on Sunday, the water level in the dam stood at 139.15 ft. The inflow into the dam was around 9,521 cusecs of water and the outflow was around 8,551 cusecs, officials said.

**Residents alerted**

The Kerala government had issued an advisory urging residents living downstream of the Mullaperiyar dam to exercise caution. Shaji Kurishumood, a resident of Vallakkadavu, abutting the banks of the Periyar, said the release of water from the Mullaperiyar dam had inundated at least five homes in the locality. Residents at Ayyappancoil, Vikas Nagar, Karuppupalam, Manjumala, Aatooram, Kadashikkadavu and Vandiperiyar were also facing flooding.

In Theni, officials declared the Suruli waterfalls off limits for tourists. In neighbouring Virudhunagar, the body of a farmer who was washed away on a flooded causeway was found on Saturday.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

NEARBY

## Shivakumar counters critics

BENGALURU

As more voices join the growing criticism over the city's crumbling infrastructure, Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday took a dig at the critics, accusing them of 'forgetting their roots'.

» PAGE 6

THE HINDU
greets its readers
on the occasion of
**Deepavali**
There will be no issue of
THE HINDU
on October 21, 2025 as
Deepavali is a holiday.
Readers can access the online edition at
www.thehindu.com

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 5

# Permission for RSS route march in Chittapur denied over law and order concerns

**The Hindu Bureau**
KALABURAGI

The RSS had put up flags, banners, and buntings across Chittapur town for their scheduled route march on Sunday. However, these were later removed by the authorities. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Chittapur taluk administration denied permission to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to hold its route march in the town on Sunday, citing potential law and order issues.

The decision came after the Chittapur police, in a report to tahsildar Nagayya Hiremath, expressed apprehensions that simultaneous processions planned by three organisations – the RSS, Bhim Army, and Bharatiya Dalit Panthers – on the same route and on the same day could lead to clashes between the groups. Interestingly the route march was taken out in the nearby Sedam despite similar curbs by the police.

Chittapur had attracted political attention as the RSS had planned to take out a route march in this Assembly constituency of Minister Priyank Kharge who was instrumental in the government making it mandatory for all organisations, including the RSS, to take permission from the authorities before using any public premises for their activities.

Meanwhile, RSS office-bearers approached the Karnataka High Court over the denial of permission. The court, upon their submission that they were ready to reschedule the event on November 2, asked the authorities to submit a report to it on the decision to be taken by them.

The court will further hear the matter on October 24.

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RELATED REPORTS » PAGE 8

# Social and Educational Survey extended again

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

The Social and Educational Survey being conducted by the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes received another round of extension on Sunday, with the State-wide survey now to be held till October 31.

Teachers who have so far played a crucial role in the door-to-door survey to enumerate the population, will, however, return to their academic responsibilities in schools.

By Sunday evening, the enumerators had reached out to 5.42 crore in about 1.43 crore households across the State, barring Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) region – reaching 96.35% of the estimated household. In Bengaluru, the survey reached 18.31 lakh households out of the total 39.83 lakh, covering 56.56 lakh population.

The progress has been 45.97 %, data from the government showed. The State government has also announced holidays to all those participating in the survey from October 20 to October 22 on account of Deepavali.

"The survey would again resume on October 23 and teachers will not be participating. The deputy commissioners of districts and GBA authorities have been asked to complete the survey before October 31, using personnel from other departments. There will be no necessity to extend the survey after that," Minister for Backward Classes Shivaraj Tangadagi told presspersons after a meeting with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in which commission's chairman Madhusudan Naik also took part on Sunday.

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RELATED REPORT » PAGE 5

# We are expecting more medals from athletics in Asian Games

The chief National coach speaks about India's overall approach for next year's Commonwealth Games and the continental showpiece, especially plans for the relay teams

Animesh Kujur holds the National record in 100m. RITU RAJ KONWAR

INTERVIEW

## *P. Radhakrishnan Nair*

**Y.B. Sarangi**

With the year 2026 a little over two months away, the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) has trained its focus on preparations for two mega events – the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland and the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

India had bagged 29 medals in athletics, including three in 4x400m relays (comprising men's gold and women's and mixed silver), at the 2023 Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. The AFI has a target of improving the medals tally from track and field this time.

A few months prior to the Hangzhou Asian Games, the country's men's 4x400m relay team had done creditably well. It hit the headlines with its Asian record-breaking performance of 2:59.05 at the 2023 Budapest World championships.

However, at the 2024 Paris Olympics, the Indian men's and women's 4x400m relay teams crashed out in the heats finishing fourth and eighth respectively.

The country has lost some pace in longer relays due to athletes' injuries.

The male runners are on the path of recovery and there is some hope.

However, a few key female sprinters – including Jyothika Sri Dandi, Rupal Chaudhary and Subha Venkatesan – have been sidelined due to injury. Building a new team and making it perform at top level will definitely take some time.

With India's top sprinters hogging the limelight because of their fine performances since March, 4x100m men and women's relays have been included in the priority list. The AFI is hopeful of a podium finish in the men's section at the continental showpiece. As two athletes –National record holder Animesh Kujur and former National record owner Manikanta Hoblidhar – have gone below 10.20s in the 2025 season, the federation is confident of a good show in Japan.

Gurindervir Singh and Amlan Borgohain are two other sprinters to watch out for in 2026. The above-mentioned quartet lowering the 15-year-old relay National record of 38.89 seconds by 0.2 second in Chandigarh during a domestic meet in April has given their backers' reason to expect better results in 2026.

The AFI is trying to streamline the selection process and is giving the athletes enough time to prepare for the big events. It has decided to select a bulk of the sprinters for the shorter relay team on the basis of their performances clocked at the National Open meet held in Ranchi from September 27 to 30.

Radhakrishnan Nair. BISWARANJAN ROUT

Nevertheless, its efforts suffered a setback in the depleted women's section primarily due to the provisional suspension of S. Dhanalakshmi for a second doping offence.

The Commonwealth Games, the other important multi-sport event next year, offers stiffer competition in athletics, which is evident from India's eight individual medals (and none in relays) in Birmingham 2022.

In order to know the overall approach for the two big events, especially plans for the relay teams, *The Hindu* spoke to chief National coach P. Radhakrishnan Nair. *Excerpts:*

**Could you please clarify how the AFI is going to select the athletes for the 4x100m relay teams for the Asian Games from the recently-concluded National Open meet?**

We will have top-six athletes from the Ranchi competition. Two more sprinters will be added to the team on the basis of the overall performance in 2025. Altogether eight will be considered for the relay. We can consider 10. We may take some time. It's still a preliminary stage of preparation. But as of now the decision is to pick eight runners from the Ranchi event.

**If someone clocks something like 10.10 in early 2026 will you consider him?**

We may not. Since the policy says we will select from this, we may not.

**How have you conceptualised the relay camps?**

There is no National coaching camp. We have centralised National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs). We will have only a National coaching camp two months before a major competition. For both the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games, we will be organising camps two months prior to those events. Same for the World championships and the Olympics. This will be just for familiarisation and make other administration work (easier in the run-up to a big event).

Gurindervir Singh and Amlan Borgohain are two sprinters to watch out for. K. MURALI KUMAR & V.V. KRISHNAN

**What are the targets for 2026?**

As for the Commonwealth Games, the chance of getting a relay medal is rather slim. We consider it as a build-up to the Asian Games. The gap between the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games is very small. If somebody peaked for the Commonwealth Games, then he/she may not be able to sustain their performance (for the Asian Games). The Commonwealth Games athletics competition starts on July 27 and ends on August 1. The Asian Games athletics is from September 19 to October 4. In some events we may do good, but we are not going for a medal hunt (in the Commonwealth Games). We are not fixing a target for it.

**What about the men's 4x400m relay teams? We have been winning gold medals at the Asian Games?**

Athletes, like Rajesh Ramesh and Amoj Jacob, got injured at the last moment. That is why they could not qualify (for the Tokyo World championships this year).

Since they could not qualify through the World Athletics Relays (by finishing within the top 14), it was very difficult to qualify as the 15th and 16th teams because those were of very high (standards). Injury haunted us too. Both in women's and men's groups – Jyothika, Shubha, Rajesh, (Muhammad) Ajmal and Amoj. Now Rajesh, Amoj, Ajmal are getting fit. They will all be good by the time the Asian Games begin.

**If they train properly and remain injury-free, what kind of time the men's quartet can achieve?**

This is only my instinct. If they are below 2:58, they will win gold in the Asian Games. Because Japan is very strong, Qatar is strong.

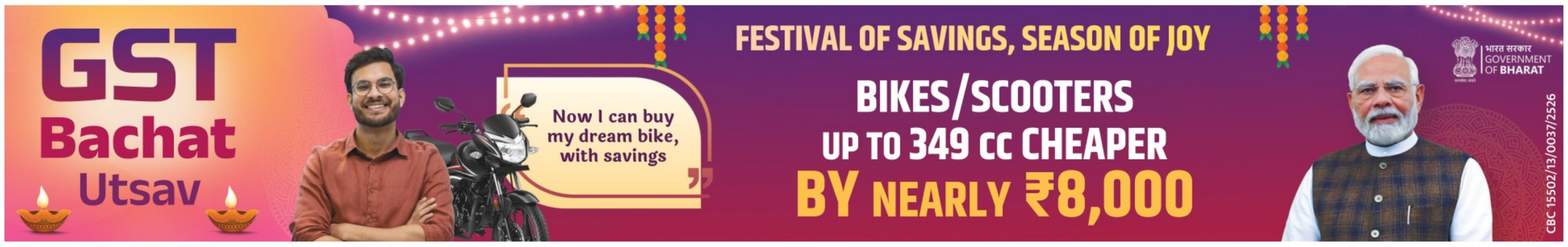
Recently Qatar has done 3:00 minutes and Japan has done 2:58. So to win a gold medal you have to run below 2:58. I think it is within our reach, it is possible for us.

**What is the realistic target for the 4x100m relay teams?**

It is very difficult to win a gold or a silver, but definitely we can win a medal. I am looking at a time better than the National record in men's 4x100m relay (38.69 seconds). But the women's 100m relay team doesn't look very promising at the moment.

**How many medals are you looking at in the Asian Games?**

We are expecting more medals than that last time. But I can't say how many.




# Health hazard as waste is dumped illegally under metro pillars

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Even as Namma Metro's much-awaited Pink Line construction progresses along Bannerghatta Road, residents are grappling with a problem beneath the elevated pillars: heaps of garbage being dumped illegally, turning the stretch near Gurappanapalya into an eyesore and health hazard.

Local residents allege that the problem has worsened over the past two months, as piles of mixed waste continue to accumulate daily under the metro corridor. "Every spot is turning into a garbage bin," said Ravi Prasad, who lives in an apartment near the stretch. "A huge amount of garbage is being dumped daily and the authorities have completely neglected the spot. Despite repeated complaints, no one has cleared it," Mr. Ravi added.

From Vega City Mall to Gurappanapalya, the under-construction Pink Line pillars have become a convenient dumping ground for residents, shopkeepers, and passers-by. K. MURALI KUMAR

**Opportunistic dumping**

From Vega City Mall to Gurappanapalya, the under-construction Pink Line pillars have become a convenient dumping ground for residents, shopkeepers, and passers-by. Adding to the mess, unauthorised posters, stickers, and advertisements have been pasted across several pillars, further defacing the newly built infrastructure. The local residents pointed out that the civic body's garbage collection in surrounding areas is irregular, leading to people disposing of waste on the roadside. They also allege that the metro construction sites lack proper barricading and waste management, allowing opportunistic dumping by nearby residents and shops.

Rahul Kumar, another resident of the area, said that the problem is not limited to waste. "Even sticking posters on metro or flyover pillars is forbidden, but these structures are filled with advertisements. During the metro construction, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) should install barricades or fencing to prevent people from dumping garbage and creating blackspots. In Bengaluru, most places under flyovers are either used for parking or for dumping waste. Now, the same thing is happening under the new metro pillars," he said.

**Dumping at night**

The residents said the dumping mostly happens during the night, making it difficult for authorities to trace offenders. "At night, people throw garbage on the road or even on the median under the metro line. The stretch stinks, and it becomes impossible to even cross the stretch in the evenings. Both BMRCL and the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) need to monitor these areas properly. The problem keeps recurring because there's no regular enforcement," said Lavanya H., a resident of Gurappanapalya.

Despite repeated clean-up drives, the residents said the problem keeps resurfacing due to lack of sustained vigilance. "With metro construction expected to continue for several more months, we demand a long-term solution, including CCTV cameras, barricades, and dedicated waste bins to ensure that the metro infrastructure is not exploited," Ms. Lavanya added.

When contacted, a senior GBA official admitted that garbage blackspots are a persistent issue under metro corridors and flyovers. "We have deployed marshals in several such locations to prevent illegal dumping. They are instructed to penalise those found throwing waste near metro pillars or along the roads," the official said.

# Cyber fraudsters dupe elderly man of ₹17.9 lakh

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Posing as enforcement officials, cyber fraudsters allegedly misused the Aadhaar credentials of an elderly man, threatened him with digital arrest, and took away ₹17.9 lakh from his savings account on Friday.

The victim, a resident of Cox Town, lodged a complaint.

**Money laundering**

The victim said in his complaint that he had received a call from a man identified as Vishal Rohit, claiming to be an official with the enforcement agency.

His associates, claiming to be sub-inspectors of the Colaba police station, Mumbai, said that his credentials have been used in money laundering linked to the PFI.

The callers threatened him that he was under digital arrest for many hours, showing the FIR copy on video call and shared documents claiming his involvement.

**'I was threatened to transfer all my money from my bank account till the probe was over.'**

"I was threatened to transfer all my money from my bank account till the probe was over. I was told that all the money will be kept until the investigation is over and will be returned after the NOC is issued," the complainant said.

**Case registered**

The fraud came to light when the accused switched off their phones, and there was no response despite repeated calls.

The East division Cyber Crime police have registered a case and are investigating.

# Roles in management consulting lead IIMB's summer placements

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) has concluded its summer placement process for the 2025-27 batch of Post Graduate Programme (PGP) and PGP in Business Analytics (PGPBA) students, achieving 100% placements for all 601 participants.

A total of 137 companies made offers during the placement week held from October 13 to 18.

This year's placement season saw record participation, with management consulting roles accounting for 46% of all offers, up from 38% in 2024. The healthcare sector recorded a 70% rise in offers, while investment banking and e-commerce roles also saw a notable surge. Nearly 30% of the recruiters participated for the first time, said a release.

**The healthcare sector recorded a 70% rise in offers, while investment banking and e-commerce roles also saw a notable surge**

Tapas Ranjan Pati, head of Career Development Services, said that management consulting continued to dominate, followed by investment banking, and product management. "Leading global recruiters shared highly positive feedback on both the students' performance and the efficiency of the overall process. Legacy recruiters from conglomerates, FMCG, and general management domains continued to hire in large numbers," he said.

# Better future for India in medicine means embracing immunology today

The strength of Indian medicine has traditionally been its clinical acumen and ability to manage vast numbers of patients. However, to truly participate in and benefit from the coming age of immuno-medicine, a foundation in immunology education is not a luxury: it is, in fact, the bedrock of public health, economic stability, and resilience

Dipyaman Ganguly

Immunology has increasingly taken centerstage in modern biomedicine, powerfully capturing the popular imagination. From revolutionising vaccine development during the COVID-19 pandemic to yielding profound insights into autoimmune disorders and cancer treatment, immunological research now drives biomedical innovation more significantly than ever. The recent pandemic revealed immunology not as an esoteric branch of science but as the very bedrock of public health, economic stability, and human resilience.

The field of immunology began benefiting humanity even before its mechanisms were fully understood. The classic example is undeniable: Edward Jenner's insights led to the invention of vaccines in 1796, over two centuries before immunology was formalised as a specialised domain. The significant number of Nobel Prizes in Physiology or Medicine awarded to immunologists underscores the field's critical importance. As we look to the future, strategically developing immunology expertise, particularly in populous nations like India with unique healthcare challenges, will be crucial for addressing global health threats and advancing personalised medicine.

## Critical role

The consistent recognition of immunological discoveries by the Nobel Foundation highlights the field's transformative impact. In total, immunology has been honoured with Nobel Prizes in 16 different years, with 31 laureates. Over the last 50 years alone, 21 immunologists have been awarded the Prize. This pattern demonstrates how the accumulation of knowledge and technological advances in immunology have transformed our understanding of human health and disease over the last half century.

The most recent addition to this distinguished legacy is the 2025 Prize awarded to Mary E. Brunkow, Fred Ramsdell, and Shimon Sakaguchi for their discoveries concerning peripheral immune tolerance. Their collective work identified regulatory T cells, revealing the body's sophisticated mechanism for preventing autoimmune attacks. These 'security guards' of the immune system maintain balance by suppressing overactive immune responses, a discovery that has opened new avenues for treating autoimmune diseases, cancer, and transplant rejection. The 2025 Prize celebrates specific breakthroughs as well as emphasises immunology's ongoing centrality to biomedical advancement.

The record-breaking development of vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 was made possible by decades of foundational immunological research, particularly on mRNA vaccines. PRASESH SHIWAKOTI/UNSPLASH

The COVID-19 pandemic also demonstrated immunology's critical role in global health security. The record-breaking development of effective vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 was made possible by decades of foundational immunological research, particularly on mRNA vaccine technology (awarded a Nobel Prize in 2023). The pandemic accelerated the adoption of novel vaccine platforms and highlighted their potential for addressing future health crises. The response illustrated how immunological knowledge, when effectively translated into technologies, can alter the course of global events and underscored the necessity of maintaining robust research ecosystems to prepare for future infectious disease threats.

## Expanding scope

Immunology has also fundamentally transformed cancer treatment through immunotherapies that harness the immune system to recognise and eliminate tumour cells. Checkpoint inhibitors (2018 Nobel Prize), CAR-T cell therapies, and cancer vaccines now represent a new pillar of oncology that complements traditional modalities like chemotherapy and radiation.

The scope of immune-based therapies

**The immune system, it turns out, is not just a shield against germs: it's a master regulatory network, connected to every organ and biological process**

is expanding into clinical contexts once thought separate from immunology. Scientists are exploring the immune system's link to the brain, investigating how inflammation might contribute to depression and neurodegenerative diseases. There is even growing evidence that the immune system plays a role in metabolic disorders and ageing, opening the possibility of immune-modulating therapies for conditions like diabetes and to promote healthier, longer lives.

The immune system, it turns out, is not just a shield against germs: it's a master regulatory network, intricately connected to the function of every organ and biological process.

Thus, the strategic importance of immunology in biomedicine's future can't be overstated. From Nobel Prize-winning basic research to revolutionary clinical applications, immunological knowledge continues to drive medical progress. For a country like India, with its immense population and unique burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases, the immunology revolution presents both a monumental opportunity and a significant challenge. By addressing current weaknesses in training programmes and leveraging unique population resources, India can position itself as a leader in immunological research relevant to both local and global health priorities. Nurturing this field through education, research investment, and international collaboration will be essential for realising its full potential to improve human health worldwide.

## Investing in immunology

The strength of Indian medicine has traditionally been its clinical acumen and ability to manage vast numbers of patients. However, to truly participate in and benefit from the coming age of immuno-medicine, a robust foundation in immunology education is not a luxury: it's an urgent necessity. We must therefore fundamentally reshape how we teach and practice immunology, fostering stronger collaborations between basic immunologists in laboratories and clinicians on the hospital frontlines. This also requires reimagining immunology pedagogy in basic biology. Undergraduate and postgraduate curricula must give due emphasis to immunology, not only to keep pace with scientific advancement but also to apprise students of the field's technological innovations.

Reforms to better prepare our biologists and medical professionals for the future will also fuel home-grown research tailored to India's specific needs. Can we design vaccines uniquely effective for our populations? Why are certain autoimmune diseases more prevalent or present differently here? How can we develop more affordable versions of cutting-edge immunotherapies for Indian cancer patients? The answers to these questions should not come from abroad; they must be cultivated in our own institutions.

As we look ahead, the nations that lead in biomedicine will be those that have invested not just in research infrastructure, but also in their human capital, by educating a generation of scientists, doctors, and technologists fluent in the intricate language of immunology.

For India, embracing this 'immunological era' is key to transforming its healthcare system from a vast provider of essential care into a global leader in the next wave of medical innovation, ensuring that the miracles of modern immunology reach every one of its citizens.

*(Dipyaman Ganguly is professor and head, Department of Biology, Ashoka University, Sonipat. dipyaman.ganguly@gmail.com)*

## THE GIST

Vaccines were invented in 1796, two centuries before immunology was formalised. The number of Nobels awarded in the field underscores its importance. Developing immunology will be crucial to addressing global health threats

Immunology has transformed cancer treatment through immunotherapies that harness the immune system to eliminate tumour cells. Checkpoint inhibitors, CAR-T cell therapies, and cancer vaccines now represent a new pillar of oncology

By addressing weaknesses in training and leveraging population resources, India can position itself as a leader in immunology. Nurturing this field through education, investment, and international collaboration will be essential to realise its full potential

## BIG SHOT

The James Webb Space Telescope's view of the Cat's Paw Nebula (NGC 6334) is a massive star-forming region of great interest to scientists. Webb's view revealed massive young stars carving away at nearby gas and dust, while their starlight produced a bright nebulous glow (blue). NASA

## WHAT IS IT?

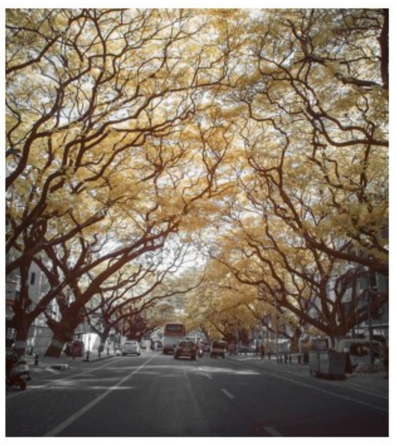
# Botanical sexism: a male bias

Vasudevan Mukunth

Have you ever wondered why your allergies seem to get worse in the spring and fall? Part of the blame may lie with a concept called "botanical sexism." This term, coined by horticulturist Tom Ogren, refers to a long-standing practice in urban planning of planting more male flora than female.

Male trees produce pollen, the fine, powdery substance that triggers allergies in many people. Female trees receive pollen to produce fruits and seeds. For decades, city planners have often chosen to plant male trees to avoid the 'mess' of fallen fruits and seeds on the streets. In fact, the 1949 US Department of Agriculture Yearbook even recommended planting male trees to avoid this "nuisance."

One unintended consequence of this preference in history was a significant increase in the amount of pollen in our urban environments. With fewer female trees to capture the pollen, the air becomes saturated with the allergens, leading to a rise in seasonal allergies and asthma. While some scientists have argued that the impact of botanical sexism is overstated and that other factors like pollution contribute to allergy severity, the connection between a high concentration of male plants and increased pollen is a legitimate issue.



The discussion around botanical sexism highlights how particular choices in urban landscapes can directly affect public health. V. SRINIVASAN/UNSPLASH

The discussion around botanical sexism highlights how particular choices in urban landscapes can directly affect public health. By understanding this concept, planners and policymakers can advocate for more balanced and diverse planting in communities, which could lead to cleaner air and fewer sneezes for everyone.

**For feedback and suggestions** for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

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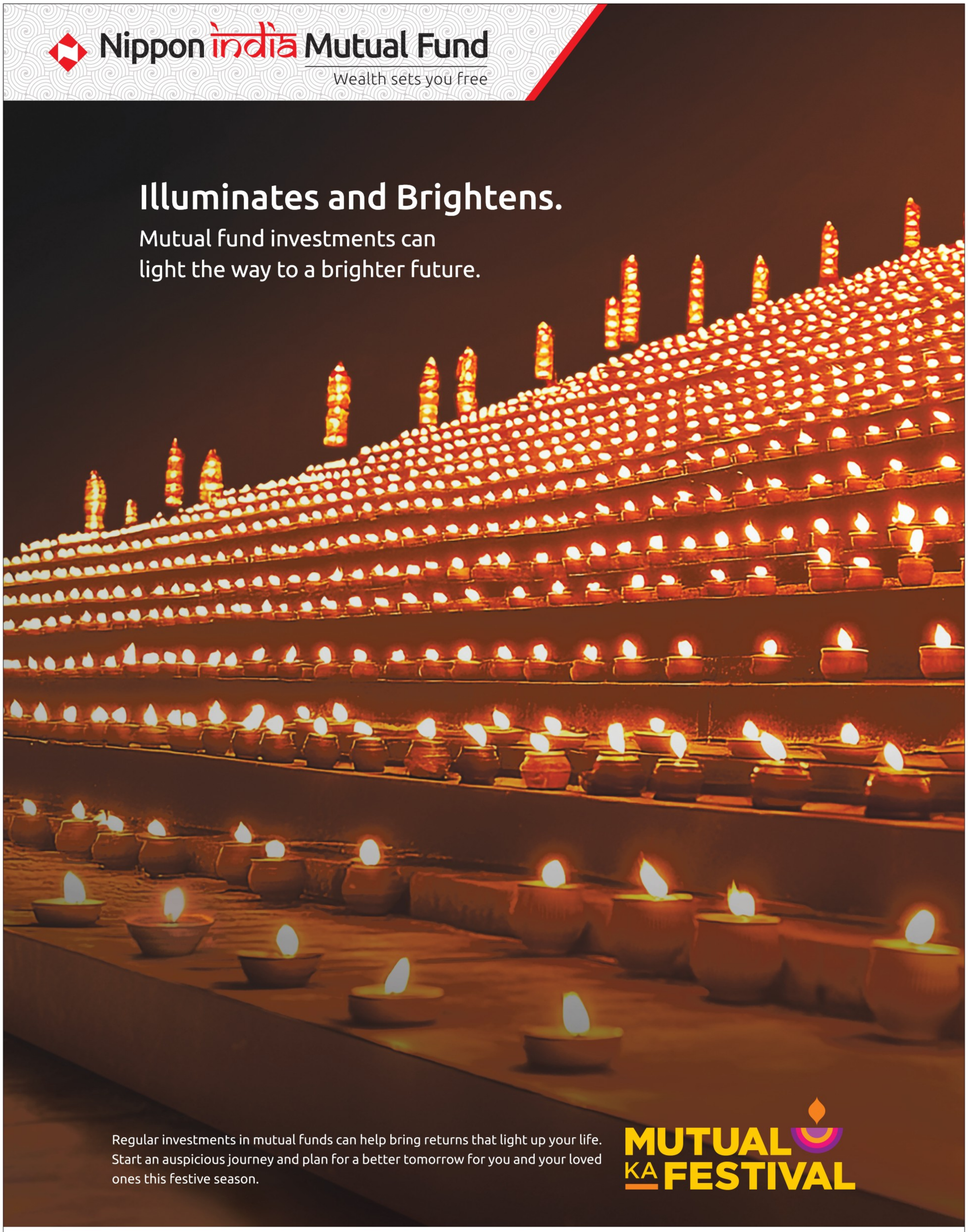

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# Text&Context

THE HINDU

## NEWS IN NUMBERS

### Number of execution petitions pending across courts in India

**8.82** In lakh. The Supreme Court has termed as "highly disappointing" the pendency of execution petitions before different courts across the country. Execution petitions are pleas filed by a decree holder seeking enforcement of court orders passed in a civil dispute. PTI

### Number of girls estimated to be out of schools worldwide

**133** million. The world has moved closer to gender parity in education, but at least 133 million girls remain out of school across the globe, according to UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring (GEM) team. According to the GEM team, progress differs sharply by region. PTI

### The increase in YOY automobile exports in the September quarter

**26** In per cent. Automobile exports from India rose 26% year-on-year (YOY) in the September quarter, driven by the highest-ever shipments of passenger vehicles, two-wheelers and three-wheelers during the period, as per the latest data released by industry body SIAM. PTI

### People made to evacuate villages in the Philippines

**22** In thousand. Tropical Storm Fengshen was tracked at midday over Manila Bay. It was expected to move away from the northern Philippine region on Sunday night. It has left at least one person dead and forced more than 22,000 people to evacuate from flood- and landslide-prone villages. PTI

### Children vaccinated in Pakistan's latest anti-polio drive

**43.3** million. More than 40 million children up to five years of age in Pakistan have been vaccinated against polio in the first five days of the anti-polio campaign across the country, the National Emergency Operations Centre said. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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# Why emergency care needs to be prioritised

Acute illnesses trigger sudden circulatory and pathological disturbances that can quickly turn fatal. Prompt diagnosis and intervention can reverse such disturbances and restore normalcy. Therefore, the time has come to treat emergency medical response not as a service but as a constitutional duty

FULL CONTEXT

J. Amalorpavanathan

Ambulances, in various forms, have existed since mankind indulged in war. The instinct to save lives, to reach a healer in time, is as old as civilisation itself.

Modern ambulances, however, are a product of the industrial revolution, shaped by better automobiles and advances in medicine, especially trauma care. The two World Wars, as well as the Korean and Vietnam wars, became great teachers in emergency medical response. War brought not only destruction but also discipline, the precision of rapid evacuation, organised triage, and timely resuscitation. These hard lessons laid the foundation for what we now know as modern emergency medicine.

**'Platinum Ten Minutes'**

The idea of the ambulance is grounded in the science of human physiology. Acute illnesses, especially trauma, trigger sudden circulatory and pathological disturbances that can quickly turn fatal. Prompt diagnosis and intervention can reverse such pathological disturbances and restore normalcy. Delayed treatment leads to irreversible pathological changes in major organs, often resulting in preventable mortality. Hence, the 'Golden First Hour' concept is now universally accepted not just in trauma care but in heart attack and stroke cases too. It has evolved from quick transport from the site of the accident to starting treatment right from the accident site, and continuing treatment while transporting the patient to a hospital.

Today, most ambulances are equipped to deliver oxygen, start intravenous fluids, secure the airway, manage breathing, including intubation and intercostal drainage, and control bleeding. Many are fitted with defibrillators, ECG and ECHO machines, and some even carry mobile CT scanners which allow early stroke diagnosis and treatment during transit. Deliveries can be conducted if necessary, and the new-born can be stabilised until the ambulance reaches the hospital. From the golden hour, the world is now moving towards the 'Platinum Ten Minutes' standard – the goal that medical help, not just an ambulance, should reach the victim within 10 minutes. Many countries aspire to this, though challenges remain, including difficult terrains, remote areas, war zones, extreme weather, and overcrowding during mass events. The 'Platinum Ten Minutes' is not a slogan but an ethical responsibility that defines how a society values human life.

**Operational challenges**

Broadly, there are two models of ambulance care. One is manned by paramedical personnel trained in basic life support, and the other is led by doctors, where the ambulance functions as a mobile hospital. India follows a mix of both. The success of either model depends not only on technology but also on the training, motivation, and coordination of the people involved in it.

However, there are many technological and operational challenges. Ambulances require special designs to safely use oxygen and other inflammable gases. They must remain in good condition, be strategically placed, and be driven by trained drivers who can move fast without causing accidents, which are not uncommon. Health workers or nurses must be skilled to handle critical patients, make quick decisions, and act effectively in a moving vehicle. A central call centre with GPS is essential to identify the nearest available ambulance, estimate travel time, alert hospitals, and ensure readiness of medical personnel, blood, and ventilators. Facilities for live communication with specialists, image transmission, and real-time guidance can save crucial minutes during resuscitation. In many advanced systems, the hospital team monitors the patient's vitals even before arrival. India has the talent to do this; what we often lack is a system that ensures it every single time.

The National Ambulance Code (AIS-125), mandated by the Union government, standardises the design, construction, performance, and equipment of ambulances. The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, and its 2019 amendments, provide the legal basis for granting ambulances the right of way. The demands of the ambulance vary from transporting a stable patient to transporting one who requires advanced life support. The design and staffing of the vehicle varies accordingly and the call centre should be able to decide which type of ambulance would be appropriate for each emergency call.

**The need to standardise**

In India, while the National Health Mission provides crucial financial and technical support to States, the States have flexibility in implementation. This leads to a disparity in the quality of service across States. For the record, the State-run 108 Ambulance service is one of the most successful examples of public-private partnerships. About 10,000 ambulances are deployed in the country transporting between seven to nine million patients a year. Tamil Nadu is one of the best performers. It has a fleet of 1,353 strategically placed vehicles. The average response time in Tamil Nadu is 10 minutes and 14 seconds – almost reaching the internationally recognised 'Platinum Ten Minutes' standard.

However, apart from the State-run 108 service, private ambulances operate in most States with little standardisation of services. There is a need for a central organ to oversee, regulate and standardise all emergency services across States and Union Territories including air ambulance and drone services which may become critical vehicles for transporting life-saving organs for transplantation. There is a need for a uniform syllabus, certification and periodic drills for all those who are involved in rescue missions. Skilled personnel are not so easily available in rural areas and attrition rate is quite high even in cities. The lack of a uniform pay structure, promotion opportunities and high levels of stress preclude even interested persons, including medical personnel choosing this field. More often, private ambulances owned by small hospitals lack qualified personnel and equipment.

It is high time that every State establishes an Emergency Services Regulatory Authority to ensure that ambulances serve the purpose of saving lives and not just transporting patients.

**A constitutional duty**

But even the best ambulance is of little use if it cannot reach the site of a disaster. This has been witnessed repeatedly during large public gatherings. The recent stampede in Karur, Tamil Nadu, is one such grim reminder. Though ambulances responded promptly, they could not enter the scene due to chaos and blocked routes. This is not new, for similar tragedies have unfolded time and time again. Every time, we mourn and move on, without fixing the basics.

The State has a duty towards its citizens. The right to life includes the right to emergency medical care. No mass gathering should be permitted without ensuring unobstructed entry and exit routes for ambulances. This should be non-negotiable. Events should not extend beyond a few hours, as most deaths occur due to dehydration and compression asphyxia rather than the stampede itself. People can suffocate even while standing, crushed by the crowd around them.

The State must deploy well-trained and certified paramedical staff or volunteers, identifiable by uniform, within such gatherings, equipped with basic emergency kits. Immediate on-site cardiopulmonary resuscitation can save many lives; it is a proven intervention. The 'Platinum Ten Minutes' standard starts the very moment disaster strikes. Every passing minute decides the line between life and death.

A nation capable of performing advanced organ transplants and robotic surgeries cannot afford to lose lives to preventable tragedies like stampedes. Our ambulance services must be standardised, regulated, and integrated, including air and drone ambulances, with fresh standard operating procedures drawn up at the earliest. Tamil Nadu, with its very rapid response time, must come out with a Comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure at the earliest. The time has come to treat emergency medical response not as a service but as a constitutional duty. In the end, the true measure of a health system is not how many hospitals it builds, but how quickly it reaches the injured when every second counts.

*Dr. J. Amalorpavanathan is member, Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission and a vascular surgeon involved in trauma care. Views are personal.*

**Critical care:** A view of a 108 ambulance in Tamil Nadu on October 14. LAKSHMI NARAYANAN E

## THE GIST

- Today, most ambulances are equipped to deliver oxygen, start intravenous fluids, secure the airway, manage breathing, including intubation and intercostal drainage, and control bleeding.
- But even the best ambulance is of little use if it cannot reach the site of a disaster. This has been witnessed repeatedly during large public gatherings. The recent stampede in Karur, Tamil Nadu, is one such grim reminder.
- The State must deploy well-trained and certified paramedical staff or volunteers, identifiable by uniform, within such gatherings, equipped with basic emergency kits.

Warm greetings to everyone on the auspicious occasion of

# Diwali

“The sacred festival of lights, Diwali, reminds us that brightness always triumphs over darkness and good always conquers evil. Let us light the lamps of love, brotherhood, and harmony in our hearts and homes. Heartfelt wishes to everyone on this Diwali.”

**Bhagwant Singh Mann**
Chief Minister, Punjab

**S. Bhagwant Singh Mann**
Chief Minister, Punjab

Department of Information and Public Relations, Punjab

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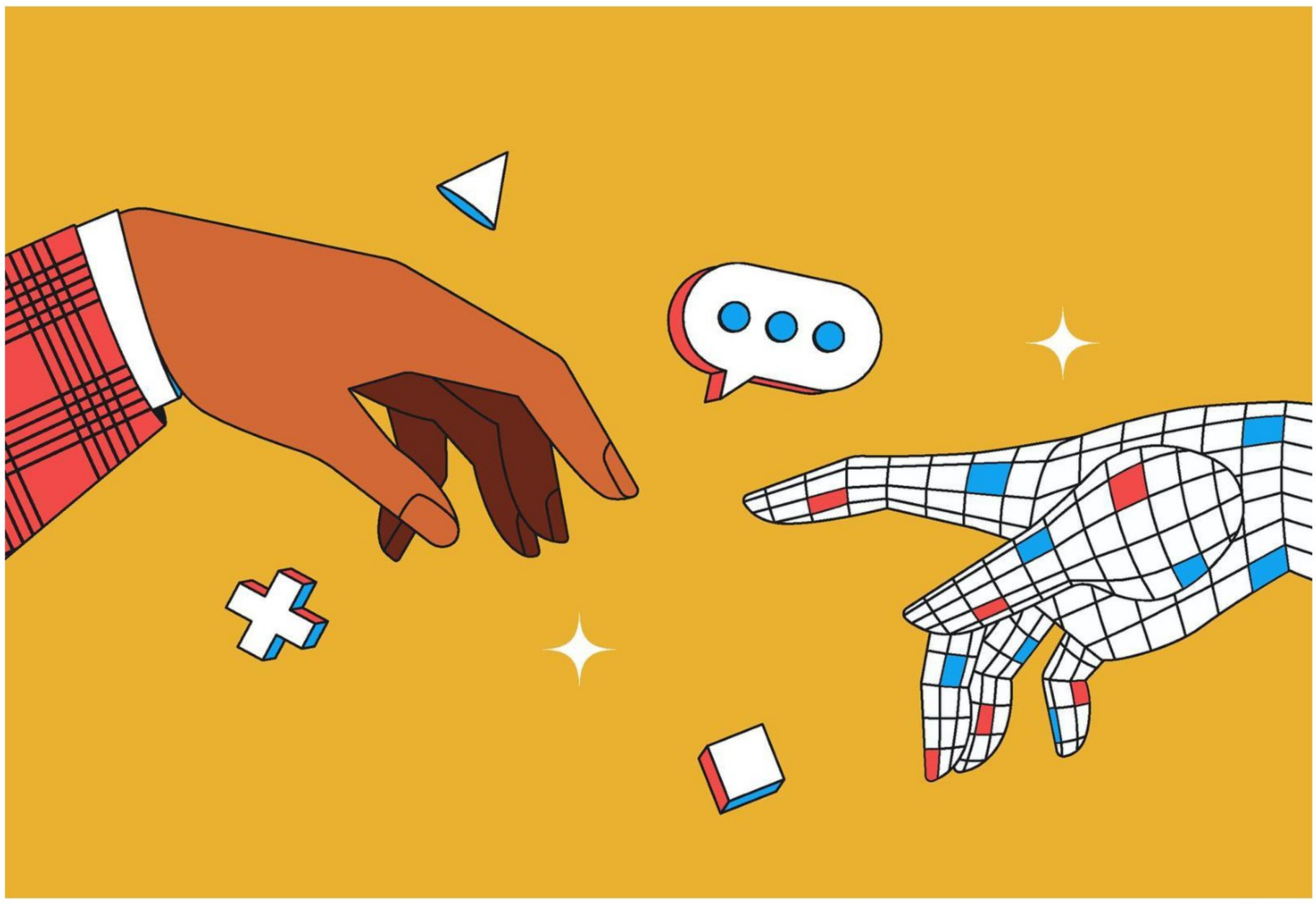


GETTY IMAGES

# What is the latest offering by OpenAI which has caused much outrage?

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman announced a new, upcoming version of ChatGPT which would let people better customise its responses. He stated that as part of the company's 'treat adult users like adults' principle, ChatGPT could even generate 'erotica' for verified adults

Sahana Venugopal

On October 14, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman posted on X about ChatGPT allowing erotica for verified adults from December. After the post garnered over 15 million views and triggered reactions ranging from enthusiasm and curiosity to disgust and rage, Mr. Altman issued a clarification two days later, addressing concerns about child safety and ChatGPT users facing mental health challenges.

**What did Sam Altman post on X?**
Earlier in the week, Mr. Altman admitted that ChatGPT was made "pretty restrictive" in order to be careful about mental health issues, but added this policy made the chatbot experience less enjoyable for those without mental health challenges. The OpenAI CEO claimed that since they had been able to "mitigate the serious mental health issues and have new tools," many restrictions could be relaxed. Such a claim is yet to be backed up by regulators.

Mr. Altman further explained that a new, upcoming version of ChatGPT would let people better customise its responses, including acting "like a friend."

"In December, as we roll out age-gating more fully and as part of our "treat adult users like adults" principle, we will allow even more, like erotica for verified adults," said Mr. Altman. This statement went viral, with some criticising Mr. Altman for making it easier to access erotica, while others opposed the sudden changes that were made to the older 4o model.

**How did OpenAI respond?**
Following the backlash, Mr. Altman clarified that AI-generated erotica was just one example of the freedom that a verified adult user could expect with ChatGPT.

Mr. Altman stressed that the company would prioritise safety over privacy and freedom for teenagers, and that no policies concerning mental health would be loosened.

However, he repeatedly noted that the company's policy was to treat adult users like adults.

"As AI becomes more important in people's lives, allowing a lot of freedom for people to use AI in the ways that they want is an important part of our mission," he posted in his clarification on X. "It doesn't apply across the board of course: for example, we will still not allow things that cause harm to others, and we will treat users who are having mental health crises very different from users who are not. Without being paternalistic we will attempt to help users achieve their long-term goals," he said.

**How is OpenAI protecting minors?**
OpenAI came under pressure to deliver better protections for children after the death of 16-year-old Adam Raine this year, whose parents sued the ChatGPT-maker. They alleged that the chatbot coached their son to die and assisted him in learning more about different suicide methods, instead of helping him find emergency support.

OpenAI has since introduced new age verification mechanisms to protect teens and more vulnerable users. In late September, the ChatGPT-maker announced parental controls so that parents/guardians could link their accounts to their teens' accounts, manage the children's chat settings, customise younger users' experience, and get notified in case their child is in danger of harming themselves.

"Once parents and teens connect their accounts, the teen account will automatically get additional content protections, including reduced graphic content, viral challenges, sexual, romantic or violent roleplay, and extreme beauty ideals, to help keep their experience age-appropriate," said OpenAI in a blog post at the time.

However, there are unresolved contradictions. During an episode of 'This Past Weekend' podcast with Theo Von this summer, Mr. Altman pointed out major gaps in privacy rights for users who ask ChatGPT extremely personal questions.

**Do other AI companies allow erotica?**
Many less regulated AI companies and chatbots allow users to engage in sexual interactions, often with flimsy age-gating measures. App store reviews for these Gen AI chatbots note the ability for users to initiate sexual role-plays with the AI chatbots. This has also impacted the safety and mental health of children.

In one instance, the mother of a 14-year-old who died by suicide in 2024 alleged that her son was sexually abused by a Character.AI chatbot, which lets users engage in role-play with AI personas inspired by popular characters. The mother has filed a lawsuit against the creator, Character Technology.

Meta too faced backlash and said it would revise content policies after it was found that its AI chatbot could make romantic or sexually suggestive comments to children.

Meanwhile, Elon Musk's Grok AI chatbot that is available on X is also able to generate erotic content, with Mr. Musk himself sharing videos of partially dressed women that he said were created with Grok Imagine.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

# A quiz on numbers on the occasion of UN World Statistics Day

V.V. Ramanan

**QUESTION 1**
In which year was the World Statistics Day first observed and what is the frequency?

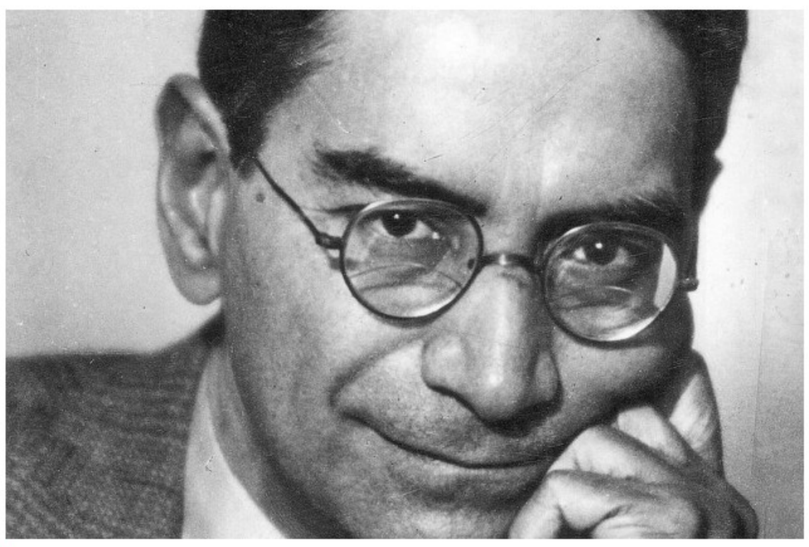
**QUESTION 2**
What is the motto for this year's World Statistics Day?

**QUESTION 3**
How many member states make up the United Nations?

**QUESTION 4**
Which is the fourth most widely practised religion in the world after Christianity, Islam and Hinduism?

**QUESTION 5**
With about 4,00,000 described species, which is the largest of all Orders, constituting 25% of all known animal species?

**QUESTION 6**
As per October data, which was the world's largest company by market cap estimated to be in excess of $4.5 trillion?



**Visual question:**
Name this scientist who made pioneering studies in anthropometry in India and founded the Indian Statistical Institute. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

**Questions and Answers to the October 17 edition of the daily quiz**: 1. This film starring Keaton was an adaptation of a novel by John le Carre. **Ans: *The Little Drummer Girl***
2. Keaton and this actor played a married couple in an iconic film. The actor played this character in the film. **Ans: Al Pacino; Michael Corleone**
3. This film starring Keaton is about a communist activist who chronicled the Russian Revolution. **Ans: *Reds***
4. In this film, Keaton plays a career-driven woman whose life turns upside down when she "inherits" a baby. **Ans: *Baby Boom***
5. Keaton frequently collaborated with this person, a writer and comedian and director of more than 50 film. **Ans: Woody Allen**
Visual: Identify the role. **Ans: Annie Hall**
**Early Birds:** Suchit Narottam| Siddhartha Viswanathan| Sudhir Thapa| Sachin. D| Dodo Jayaditya

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

# *He has been acting up since yesterday*

His parents are concerned as his alcohol addiction has been eating away at his health

S. Upendran

"Is something wrong with Saurabh? He just shouted at me for no reason."
"You must excuse him. He just came to know he hasn't been promoted."
"Really? That's sad! The fact he hasn't been promoted in over five years must be eating away at him."
"Eating away at him? What are you talking about? How can anything..."
"The expression 'eat away at someone' is used in informal contexts to mean to trouble or worry someone. It's been a cause of worry for some time."
"And because the person is worried, the expression carries with it a sense of unhappiness."
"I guess you could say that. Here's an example. The fact that his friends didn't throw a surprise party on his birthday was still eating away at Jai."
"The thought that her cousin's cancer had returned was eating away at Sunitha."
"That's a very good example. It's also possible for something to eat away at something. It doesn't necessarily have to be an individual. Renu's gambling has been eating away at the family's fortune."
"In this context, 'eating away' doesn't mean 'to worry' but 'to reduce'."
"Very good! The hard water that we get from the Municipal authorities is eating away at the pipes."
"By the time we returned from our vacation, the acid from the inverter had eaten away at the wooden table it had been placed on."
"Which reminds me, I think I need to replace my inverter battery. It's been acting up."
"Acting up? Does it mean that it's not working properly?"
"Exactly! When used with things, that's exactly what the expression means. Although I had it serviced less than a month ago, the car is acting up again."
"You should take it to my mechanic. He's good. How about this example? My laptop has been acting up. It's more than seven years old."
"Sounds good. 'Acting up' can be used with people as well. Since the kids didn't have an afternoon nap, they're acting up. What you're trying to say..."
"You probably mean they're not behaving properly because they didn't have their usual afternoon nap."
"Exactly! The expression usually suggests bad behaviour. Dilip's son acts up for no reason at all."
"When the students saw the substitute teacher, they started acting up."
"That's to be expected. When you see a new teacher entering the classroom, you can count on the students to act up."
"Count on? Does it mean depend on?"
"Very good! When you say that someone can be counted on, what you mean is that he can be depended on."
"I can always count on you when I need some money."
*upendrankye@gmail.com*

## Word of the day

**Slovenly:**
negligent of neatness especially in dress and person; habitually dirty and unkempt

**Synonyms:** frowsy

**Usage:** *He is very careless and slovenly in his work.*

**Pronunciation:** newsth.live/slovenlypro

**International Phonetic Alphabet:** /ˈslʌv.ən.li/, /ˈslɒv.ən.li/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

# Survey: South and East corporations likely to face shortage of enumerators

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Surveyors may have to work till 9 p.m. every day in view of the new deadline in the Greater Bengaluru Authority limits. SUDHAKARA JAIN

**SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL SURVEY**

The South and East corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) are expected to face a shortage of enumerators for the ongoing Social and Educational survey, the deadline for which has been extended by the State government till October 31, as the survey is progressing slow, specifically in the GBA limits.

To address this, the government, as recommended by the corporation commissioners, is planning to reallocate enumerators from other GBA corporations where staffing levels are higher or survey coverage has been comparatively better.

The shortage is mainly because a majority of the enumerators in these two corporations are school teachers, who will resume their regular teaching duties starting October 23. Moreover, the East Corporation has a high number of 'locked houses' or the households where enumerators went at least three times, but could not complete the survey as the residents were not available, sources said. During the meeting, where Chief Minister Siddaramaiah reviewed the survey progress, GBA Corporation Commissioners also highlighted the need for MLAs and political leaders to actively encourage residents to participate. Officials noted that even when the Commissioners themselves visited households and apartment complexes, residents remained reluctant to take part. A senior official told *The Hindu* that he visited numerous households before submitting his report, but nearly 100 households still refused to cooperate.

The GBA officials have also recommended extending the working hours of enumerators by three hours.

"Despite the extension, progress in the GBA limits has been slow. So far, only about 40% of households have been surveyed over the past 15 days. With nearly 60% of households yet to be covered, completing the survey within the revised timeline will remain a challenge and hence working hours to conduct the survey should be increased," the official said.

# EDUCATIONPLUS



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

# Build climate resilience

**By linking climate science with real-life challenges, colleges can turn awareness into action and create a generation ready to protect their future**

**Pavithra M.B.**

When the monsoon turned merciless last December, a government school in North Chennai saw its classrooms sink under waist-deep water.

A student said, "We knew the chapter on floods by heart but not what to do when the water came for us." That single sentence is a mirror to our education system; overflowing with facts, but starved of resilience. Their syllabus covered the water cycle, but not the cycle of neglect that made their house flood year after year.

Environmental education must evolve – from moral science to moral responsibility. Posters proclaim "Save the Earth", but students are rarely taught to how to do so.

**Lived curriculum**

Across India, floods drown schools, heatwaves close universities, and smog turns morning assemblies into health hazards. Yet, for most students, climate change remains an annual essay topic, not a lived curriculum. Environmental education in its current form often ends where the examination does. What we lack is not awareness but the kind of awakening that connects climate science with constitutional rights, ethics, and daily choices.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 speaks of "environmental awareness" and "sustainability at every level," but in practice, ecology remains a polite elective, not a civic necessity. Students can graduate in any discipline without ever confronting questions such as Who bears the cost of climate change? Whose lands are flooded so that cities may breathe? Whose voices are drowned when development advances?

Environmental rights are not a footnote in civics textbooks; they are the frontline of justice. When disasters strike, it is the poor, the rural, the women, and the children who lose first and rebuild last. Teaching climate resilience, therefore, is not about recycling drives and plantation days. It is about nurturing empathy, responsibility, and civic courage.

Around the world, education systems are awakening to this truth. In Italy, climate education is compulsory across grades, woven into Literature, Science, and History. In New Zealand, indigenous Maori wisdom anchors the climate curriculum, linking stewardship with heritage. Finland conducts "climate drills" alongside fire drills; Japan ties tsunami drills to moral education; Rwanda's eco-clubs reforest hillsides.

These are not electives but essentials that produce a generation that sees sustainability as survival, not symbolism.

India, too, has sparks of promise. Kerala's Flood Literacy Programme, Tamil Nadu's Green Campus Initiative, and Delhi's Eco-Clubs show what happens when policy meets participation. The challenge now is to weave environmental rights into every discipline: Law, Economics, Sociology, even Engineering.

A Commerce student must learn that corporate responsibility extends beyond profit margins to carbon footprints. A lawyer must see that justice is incomplete without environmental equity. A scientist must measure innovation by sustainability, not novelty.

In Chennai, students at an engineering college built a low-cost flood-alert system using recycled sensors after Cyclone Michaung. What began as a class project became a life-saving tool. That could well be the manifesto for a new age of learning, where climate literacy becomes civic literacy.

In Kerala, students formed an "eco-justice club" after the 2018 floods, lobbying for safer housing in their panchayat. That is education in its truest form; not information, but transformation.

Physics can teach energy justice, Economics can teach carbon equity, and Literature can explore eco-feminism through poetry and protest. The goal is not to add another subject, but to infuse every subject with the consciousness of a warming planet.

**Resilience literacy**

Schools and colleges should introduce "resilience literacy" – teaching students to interpret weather warnings, manage resources, and understand local ecosystems. Equally vital is mental resilience. Amid headlines of fires, floods, and extinction, the young experience "eco-anxiety." Education must turn worry into agency.

The UN SDG 13 on Climate Action and SDG 4.7 on Education for Sustainable Development urge nations to merge justice, rights, and sustainability. The NEP 2020 gives us the framework; what remains is imagination. Let our classrooms become laboratories of empathy where sustainability is not memorised, but lived.

Teaching the young to conquer the world while their world collapses is not progress. It is time our classrooms stop treating Nature as a backdrop and recognise it as the protagonist. Climate resilience will take root when a child plants a sapling and knows why it matters; when a teacher pauses a lesson on the water cycle to ask, "Whose right is clean water?" When education begins there, sustainability ceases to be a slogan and becomes a way of being.

The writer is Associate Professor, PG Department of Human Rights and Duties Education, Ethiraj College for Women, Chennai.

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Sd/-
Director

# DKS counters critics during 'Walk with Bengaluru' campaign

Though he denounced online posts as 'extreme level criticism', he acknowledged, 'Of course, we welcome criticism since it adds value to democracy, But a few people are taking it to an extreme level'

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

As more voices join the growing criticism over the city's crumbling infrastructure, Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday took a dig at the critics, accusing them of 'forgetting their roots'.

Mr. Shivakumar's 'Walk with Bengaluru' drive, held at Veerayodhara Vana in southeast Bengaluru, became a platform for him to counter the criticism, even though he began the public outreach event by assuring citizens, "The voice is yours, the solution is ours." He lashed out at those taking to X to criticise the city, saying, "Those who came to Bengaluru and grew here have forgotten how they once were and what they are now. You forget the roots; you don't get the fruit." Mr. Shivakumar added that he was unbothered by such negative remarks. Although he denounced the online posts as 'extreme level criticism', Mr. Shivakumar acknowledged, "Of course, we welcome criticism since it adds value to democracy. But a few people are taking it to an extreme level."

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar inspecting Ejipura flyover after the 'Walk with Bengaluru' programme at Veerayodharavana Park, Koramangala, in Bengaluru on Sunday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition R. Ashoka condemned Mr. Shivakumar's remarks, urging him to 'stop this ugly politics' and accusing the Congress government of intimidating citizens and business leaders who voice their opinions. He said Bengaluru has always symbolised innovation and openness, not fear or arrogance. Mr. Ashoka said targeting respected citizens like Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw for expressing concerns shows the government's insecurity. Visibly, Mr. Shivakumar appeared less at ease on Sunday, in contrast to his earlier three 'Walk with Bengaluru' events.

**Key issues**

Among the key issues raised by residents were sewage treatment concerns, flooding, incomplete development projects, including the long-delayed Ejipura Flyover, and a lack of regular bus services. Raghu, president of the 4th Block Koramangala Residents' Welfare Association, pointed out to the slow progress of the project connecting Defence Road from Lower Agram to the Intermediate Ring Road (IRR) and from the IRR to Iblur and Bellandur. He urged officials to expedite the paperwork to speed up the process.

Harish, a resident of Teachers' Colony, complained that the service road along the Outer Ring Road in southeastern Bengaluru remains encroached by hawkers and street vendors, posing challenges for pedestrians. The residents also expressed their concern about the frequent flooding in S.T. Bed Layout, Ejipura, Rajendra Nagar, and Venkateshwara Layout.

Shivashankar, a resident of S.T. Bed Layout, suggested the desilting of Bellandur Lake to reduce flooding.

T. Babu, president of the BTM Layout Welfare Association, said that the 5% guidance value fee to convert B-khata properties into A-khata would place an additional burden on middle-class families. He urged the government to consider a fee structure based on land area instead.

R. Sunderesh, a resident of Koramangala, pointed out to the unregulated growth of Paying Guest (PG) accommodations in the area, a concern echoed by at least two other participants.

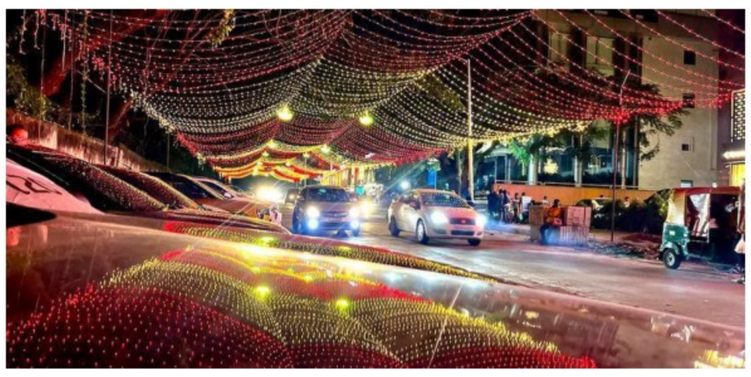
**Ejipura Flyover**

Many residents demanded an update on the long-delayed 2.38-km Ejipura Flyover. Mr. Shivakumar assured them that the project would be completed by March 2026. He later visited the site to inspect the ongoing construction works.

In response to the backlash from IT companies over Bengaluru's infrastructure woes, Mr. Shivakumar announced that he would hold a meeting with representatives of the IT sector, similar to the 'Walk with Bengaluru' initiative.

# City all lit up for Deepavali

(Clockwise): Commercial Street was illuminated as part of Deepavali celebrations; a customer checking decorative items at a shop in Rajajinagar; people thronged the Commercial Street for Deepavali shopping, and customers buying firecrackers ahead of the festival at R.T. Nagar ground in Bengaluru on Sunday.
SUDHAKARA JAIN, ALLEN EGENUSE J.



# Crematorium to be closed for repairs

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

The Banashankari Electric Crematorium will remain closed from October 23 to October 31 due to essential repair work on two of its furnaces. A release said the closure is necessary to replace the body bricks and coils of the furnaces. Residents are advised to use alternative cremation facilities during this period.

**राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन, राजस्थान**
स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, स्वास्थ्य भवन, तिलक मार्ग,
राजस्थान, जयपुर फोन न. 0141-2225736, E--Mail ID: cemhraj@gmail.com
क्रमांक : 3180 दिनांक : 10.10.25

**ई-निविदा सूचना संख्याः 21/2025-26**

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से भवन निर्माण कार्य हेतु उपर्युक्त श्रेणी में राजस्थान में पंजीकृत संवेदकों एवं राज्य सरकार / केन्द्र सरकार के अधिकृत सगठनों / केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग / डाक एवम् दूर संचार विभाग / रेल्वे इत्यादि में पंजीकृत संवेदकों, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के ए, एए श्रेणी के सवेदकों के समकक्ष हो, से निर्धारित प्रपत्र मे भवन निर्माण कार्य के लिए ई-प्रोक्यूरमेन्ट प्रकिया से ऑन लाईन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है।

| | |
|---|---|
| कुल कार्य | 04 |
| निविदा की कुल लागत | 11732.00 लाख |
| ऑनलाईन निविदा आवेदन डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की तिथि | 16 अक्टूबर से 06 नवम्बर तक |
| ऑनलाईन निविदा खोलने की तिथि | 07 नवम्बर 2025 अपराह्न 01.00 बजें |

निविदा से सम्बन्धित विवरण वेब साईट http://dipr.rajasthan.gov.in, http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in व https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है। सम्पूर्ण निविदा प्रक्रिया http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर ऑनलाइन सम्पादित की जावेगी।
UBN:-
1. NRH2526 WLOB01209 2. NRH 2526WLOB0 1210
3. NRH2526WLOB01211 4. NRH2526WLOB01212.

DIPR/C/15373/2025 मुख्य अभियंता, चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य राजस्थान, जयपुर

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public are informed that My Client , **MR. ANU SATHYAN, S/o Mr.Nanu Sathyadevan**, aged about 43 years, residing at and also the Joint owner of the Corner Site bearing No. 119, measuring 228.65 square meters (2461 Square Feet), in Sy No. 7/1 of Gonighattapura Village, in the layout known as **"THE SANCTUARY PHASE-II"** having E-Khatha No.150200101600720581, Situated at **Gonighattapura Village, Anekal Taluk** hereby informs that.

The original rectification deed bearing Document No.SRJ-1-829-2023-24, dated 02.05.2023 registered in the office of the sub registrar Sarjapura in respect of above said property has been lost and not in a position to trace . In this regard My client have lodged a police complaint on 14.10.2025. bearing Lost report No. 1851411/2025.

Any person/s in possession of the aforesaid document may return the same to us or anyone having any sort of claim over the said property may lodge their objections in writing within **7 days** from this day to the undersigned

**MURALIMOHAN C.**
Advocate ,
MSS LAW CHAMBERS ,
NO.E.117/2, 1st floor, 22nd cross,
3rd sector HSR Layout,
Bangalore -560102. Ph:636002226

Bangalore Date : 20-10-2025

**KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED**
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No.: CEE/Tr(OP)ZM/SEE(O)/AEE-4/25-26/5383 Date: 30.09.2025

**TENDER NOTIFICATION**
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Mode Only)

**KPTCL invites Bids against Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/CEE/TZM/SEE(O)/AEE-4/616/UGCable/2025-26/Call-3 dated: 29.09.2025** "for Combined package of Design, Manufacture, Supplying and Erection of 11kV U.G. of sizes 1CX1000Sqmm, 3CX240Sqmm for various sub-stations coming under Operations Division KPTCL Hootagalli, Hebbani, N.R.Mohalla & Chamarajanagara under Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, Mysuru."

The Bids will be received through electronic tender mode only. The detailed notification regarding the subject enquiry in the E-tendering process can be obtained by logging onto **KPP Portal website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **21.10.2025**. Other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

**Sd/- Chief Engineer (Elec)., Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, Prasarana Bhavana, FTS Compound, Mysuru-570007. Telephone: 0821-2455770/2457275.**

# Two killed in bus pile-up

**The Hindu Bureau**
MYSURU

A pile-up involving three KSRTC buses near Malavalli in Mandya district resulted in the death of two persons while scores of passengers were injured, on Sunday evening.

The accident took place near Bachanahalli, and the condition of 10 of the injured was said to be critical. The impact of the collision was such that the front portion of the vehicles was reduced to a mass of mangled metal. Vehicle movement on the highway was affected for nearly an hour.

# Focus will be on long-term urban planning: Commissioner

We are preparing traffic and growth projections for the next 10 to 30 years to proactively manage city expansion and the increasing traffic, says West Corporation Commissioner Rajendra K.V.

INTERVIEW

***Rajendra K.V.***

**Rishita Khanna**
BENGALURU

From the city's oldest neighbourhoods like Malleswaram, to its industrial belts in Peenya and Kengeri, the West Corporation is Bengaluru's most densely populated zone. In an exclusive interview with *The Hindu*, the West Corporation Commissioner, Rajendra K.V., said the focus would be on long-term urban planning, with traffic and growth projections mapped for the next 10 to 30 years to proactively manage expansion and congestion

Rajendra K.V.

**Malleswaram and Rajajinagar are choked with traffic, worsened by dug-up roads and pending white-topping. How soon will citizens see smoother commutes?**

The focus is on road-widening projects where concrete work is ongoing. Coordination between various agencies is essential, especially regarding utility shifting and waterlines, which often delay progress. We are in discussions with the Deputy Commissioner of Police, West, and Joint Commissioner, West, to explore traffic signal improvements and long-term solutions like underpasses. We are preparing traffic and growth projections for the next 10 to 30 years to proactively manage city expansion and the increasing traffic. By anticipating future problems, we can implement cost-effective solutions before congestion worsens. .

**In many areas like Basaveshwaranagar, Kamakshipalya, and Kengeri, black spots of uncollected waste continue to remain despite repeated clean-up drives**

Most Primary Collection Points are functioning well, and street-sweeping has improved, but there are still issues with auto tippers, especially in areas where one contractor is handling multiple wards. We're addressing this through a new tender process to improve coverage and efficiency. We're working to identify more bulk generators and assign specific agencies for each waste type. We're also promoting in-house and community composting, especially for leaf and organic waste, to reduce landfill burden. Black spots remain a concern, and since one solution doesn't fit all, we're exploring flexible collection models like twice-a-day pickups in high-density or working-class areas.

**Industries in Peenya generate a large volume of waste, and residents allege that industrial effluents are being let into nearby drains, worsening pollution in the Vrishabhavathi valley**

In Peenya and R.R. Nagar industrial areas, with over 1,000 units each, there's a need to streamline industrial infrastructure. my experience in other major districts shows a common issue - lack of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs). Typically, such plants should serve all units collectively, but this hasn't been implemented here, largely due to legacy issues, not individual fault. Coordination is needed between the Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board and Pollution Control Board. I plan to engage local industry associations, assess tax compliance, and explore what support we can offer while ensuring industries fulfill environmental mandates like linking to CETPs or building new ones, etc. It's a challenging but necessary task.

**Core wards like Basavanagudi, Malleswaram, and Rajajinagar often get quicker civic works, while outer wards are left waiting**

These areas have historically received quicker civic works because they are older, well-established parts of Bengaluru with stronger infrastructure and revenue. In contrast, outer areas like Hemmigepura, Ullal, and Herohalli are newer, mostly residential, and still developing. To balance this, we will ensure fair allocation of funds based on need, not just existing infrastructure. We also plan to boost local revenue through better property tax collection and by using government lands for leases, advertisements, or public-private partnerships.

**In areas like Nagarabhavi, Nayandahalli, and R.R. Nagar, flooding remains a recurring nightmare whenever it rains, reportedly because of missing links and encroachments on stormwater drains**

In the past couple of weeks, I have observed a few episodes of heavy rain. While I wouldn't call it torrential, the rainfall was significant. However, there was no major water stagnation in our areas, and no habitations were flooded. I received very few complaints, even from low-lying zones, which shows that the drainage system is generally functioning. However, I plan to study the local rainfall patterns, terrain, and storm-water flow more closely to identify any problem areas.

**Timings**
**BENGALURU**

| | |
|---|---|
| **MONDAY, OCT. 20** | |
| RISE 06:11 | SET 17:58 |
| RISE 05:04 | SET 17:10 |
| **TUESDAY, OCT. 21** | |
| RISE 06:11 | SET 17:58 |
| RISE 05:50 | SET 17:45 |
| **WEDNESDAY, OCT. 22** | |
| RISE 06:11 | SET 17:57 |
| RISE 06:37 | SET 18:23 |

| Bengaluru Weather | max | min |
|---|---|---|
| Tumakuru | 29 | 24 |
| Mysuru | 29 | 20 |
| Bengaluru | 29 | 21 |

**Bengaluru Today**
**28°C** The weather will be comfortable. Night will be pleasant. Few spells of moderate rain and thundershower will occur.

**Bengaluru Tomorrow**
**29°C** Morning will be pleasant. Day will be slight warm. Spell of light to moderate rain and thundershower to occur.

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THE HINDU
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**Government of Odisha**
**Information and Public Relations Department**
IPR-FP-GP-0002-2025/15727 /IPR Dated: 18/10/2025

**2nd Corrigendum Notice**

In continuation to the RFP No. 15037, dated 06.10.2025, inviting eligible bidders to "Conceptualize, Design and Fabricate the Odisha Pavilion at India International Trade Fair(IITF)-2025, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi", it is hereby informed to all concerned that the last date and time for submission of the proposal is extended to **Dt. 22.10.2025, till 5PM**, since last date for such submission of application in earlier advt was on 20.10.2025 being declared as a holiday by the State Government. The opening of tender shall be held on **23.10.2025 at 11.30 AM**.

**Sd/- Director**
Z- OIPR-15001/11/1237/2526

**KARNATAKA ROAD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED**
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
"Samparka Soudha" Survey No.8, (B.E.P Premises)
Dr. Rajkumar Road, Rajaji Nagar 1st Block, Bengaluru-560010.
Tel: 080-22024000, Fax: 080-22024000. (e-mail: mdkrdcl@gmail.com & cekrdcl@gmail.com)

No: KRDCL/IFB/2025-26/14 Date: 16-10-2025

**TENDER NOTIFICATION**

1. Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited [KRDCL] invites offer from the reputed agencies having experience in respect of following works as per the requirement on percentage basis in two cover system as detailed below:

| Sl. No. | Name of the Work | Amt put to tender (in Rs.) | Earnest Money Deposit (In Rs.) | Period of Services |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Providing Manpower Services to Karnataka Road Development Corporation Ltd., (KRDCL) to work at - Head Office, Bengaluru & KRDCL - Project Offices across Karnataka for the year 2025-26. | 13,53045.00 | 2,70,000.00 | One year |

2. Interested applicants may download bidding documents from the KPP Portal **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and submit the bids and EMD (electronically) through KPP Portal only.
3. The calendar of events for various activities is as follows;
   a. The last date and time for submission of queries is **03-11-2025 up to 17:30 Hrs.** The applicants may submit their queries through electronic mail: **cekrdcl@gmail.com**
   b. Pre-bid meeting will be held on **04-11-2025 at 16.30 Hrs** in office of the **Managing Director, KRDCL, Bengaluru** at the above address.
   c. The Last date and time for submission of Bids is **17-11-2025 up to 17:00 Hrs.**
   d. Date and time of opening of Technical Bids is **18-11-2025 at 17:30 Hrs**

***Please note henceforth, any changes in the schedule will not be published through News papers and further changes will be updated only on Karnataka Public procurement portal Website.**

DIPR/CP/3360/AAA/2025-26

**Sd/- CHIEF ENGINEER, KRDCL, BENGALURU**

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ISSN 0971 - 751X

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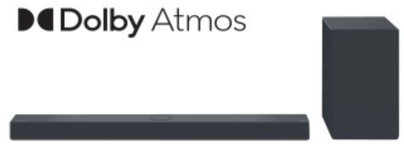


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A BG-BGE

## From Page One

### Permission for march in Chittapur denied

In his order rejecting the RSS's application, Mr. Hiremath referred to the memorandum submitted by Prahlad Vishwakarma, the RSS's district-level office-bearer from Kalaburagi, who had sought permission to conduct the march as part of the organisation's centenary celebrations and Vijayadashami programme.

Following the request, the tahsildar wrote to the Chittapur police seeking their opinion. The police, after assessing the situation and gathering intelligence reports, advised against granting permission, citing serious law and order implications.

According to the police report, tension gripped Chittapur following an earlier incident in which an RSS worker allegedly made derogatory remarks and issued a life threat to Mr. Kharge. The incident, which led to a case being registered in Bengaluru's Sadashivanagar police station, had sparked protests across Karnataka, including a bandh in Chittapur two days ago in support of Mr. Kharge.

The report further noted that the Bhim Army's State youth wing and the Bharatiya Dalit Panthers had also sought permission to conduct their own route marches along the same path on October 19, 2025.

The police feared that simultaneous events by these groups could trigger confrontation and disturb public peace.

Accepting the police recommendation, the tahsildar, in his order issued late on Saturday said permission for the RSS route march could not be granted so as "to prevent any untoward incident and to ensure maintenance of peace and public order."

Copies of the order have been forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner of Kalaburagi, the Assistant Commissioner of Sedam, and the Chittapur police inspector for information and necessary action.

Meanwhile, RSS workers, who had made elaborate arrangements for the route march, had put up saffron flags, banners, and buntings across Chittapur town.

However, municipal authorities removed them early on Saturday morning, citing the absence of necessary permission for them.

### Social and Educational Survey extended again

According to the initial schedule, the survey that started on September 22 (barring GBA region) was to end on October 7, which was extended till October 19. To ensure the survey would be completed, the government had extended the Dasara holidays for government and aided schools till Sunday.

So far, seven districts including Mandya, Tumakuru, Haveri, Chitradurga, Udupi, Chikkamagaluru, and Davangere have reported 100% coverage, while Gadag, Koppal, and Shivamogga have reported about 99% coverage.

Raichur, Bagalkot, Uttara Kannada, and Hassan districts have a coverage of about 97%, and Chamarajanagar and Bengaluru Rural districts have reported about 95% coverage.

"The survey has been a little slow in Ramanagara, Dharwad, and Bidar where 86%, 88 % and 79.46 % of the target has been met respectively. In some districts, the survey has been completed. The survey will be continued only in districts where work is still pending," the Minister said.

In GBA region where the survey commenced on October 4, the survey has shown a progress of 45.97 %,he added. "We are confident of achieving the target in Bengaluru," he said.

**Takes exception**

Taking exception to Rajya Sabha member Sudha Murty's statement on her refusal to take part in the survey, Mr. Tangadagi said that those in responsible positions should understand the survey instead of making such statements.

"The survey is capturing data on social, educational, economic and employment of the population of all people. This is not restricted to backward classes. Please do not mislead people."

# HC seeks report on revised proposal for RSS march

Counsel for the petitioner tells High Court that November 2 would be convenient to hold the procession in Chittapur and also sought its direction to authorities to permit the event

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

A file photo of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh volunteers taking out a march in Bengaluru.

The High Court of Karnataka, in a special sitting on Sunday, directed the Kalaburagi district administration to submit a report by October 24 indicating the action taken in according permission for the revised proposal of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to hold its route march in Chittapur on November 2 instead of Sunday.

Justice M.G.S. Kamala passed the interim order on a petition filed by Ashok Patil, convener of the RSS route march, Chittapur.

The petitioner had questioned the legality of the decision of the Chittapur tahsildar, who on Saturday denied permission for the march.

The official said that there could be a law and order issue as two other organisations, the Bhim Army and the Bharatiya Dalit Panthers, also proposed to hold rallies on the same day, like the RSS.

Though the tahsildar had initially sought more information on Sunday's march from the petitioner, he later denied permission for the procession stating that he got the news about the other two rallies.

The petitioner approached the tahsildar on October 17, as a request submitted on October 13 to the Chittapur civic body and the Circle Police Inspector for allowing the march was not considered.

During the hearing, the court asked senior advocate Aruna Shyam, appearing for the petitioner, whether it would be possible for the petitioner and his organisation to hold the event on some other date. To this, the senior advocate said that November 2 would be convenient and sought the court's direction to authorities to permit the event then, based on the request submitted to hold the march on Sunday.

Though State Advocate-General Shashi Kiran Shetty said that the district administration could ensure a designated place for the march, he told the court that the authorities would consider the request for the march, while pointing out that judicial precedents would indicate that taking out processions through public streets has been discouraged and denounced.

Meanwhile, the court recorded the undertaking given on behalf of the petitioner that the RSS, which already conducted over 250 route marches sans any untoward incidents, would ensure that peace, tranquility, and harmony would be maintained in its proposed route march in Chittapur also.

Further hearing was adjourned till October 24.

# 'Constitutional rights are being taken away'

**The Hindu Bureau**
KALABURAGI

Condemning the denial of permission for the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's (RSS) route march in Chittapur, BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra on Sunday accused the Congress government of functioning in an "authoritarian" manner reminiscent of the Emergency.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), Mr. Vijayendra alleged that constitutional rights were being "snatched away by those who claim to uphold the Constitution."

"In Chittapur, those who claim to uphold the Constitution are themselves violating constitutional rights. The tahsildar's denial of permission for the RSS centenary celebrations, citing incomplete submission of 12 documents, reminds one of North Korea's dictatorial regime under Kim Jong Un," he wrote.

Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok alleged that the Congress government supports those who hail Pakistan and opposes those who say Bharat Mata Ki Jai".

**'Priyank eying power'**

Taking to social media, BJP's Rajya Sabha member Lahar Singh Siroya said: "When regime change within the Congress is being talked about loudly in power circles, Kharge Jr. has become extra ideological. He knows making the RSS a hobby horse is the best way to jockey for power with the real Congress high command. By attacking RSS, Kharge Jr. has emerged as most loyal to Mr. Rahul Gandhi's thinking and thought process than any other Congress leader in Karnataka, including Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, DCM D.K. Shivakumar and Ministers G. Parameshwar, H.K. Patil and Krishna Byre Gowda."

Mr. Singh further said: "I hope Kharge Jr is installed as Chief Minister after Mr. Siddaramaiah steps down in the near future (November?). After all, Kharge Sr. despite his long years in Karnataka politics couldn't get the chair. At least the son should be compensated."

## CORRIDORS OF POWER

**Masters of narrative building**

It has been proven quite often that the BJP excels in building a narrative, particularly on issues concerning religion or religious practices, tweaking a few things to suit the need. A recent function organised for the initiation of road development work in a ward represented by a Congress councillor in Hubballi, in which verses from the Quran were recited, is one such example. Soon after the function was held, Arvind Bellad, MLA for the Hubballi-Dharwad West constituency, in which the programme was held, alleged a protocol violation. Soon a video clip of the Quran being recited in a government programme went viral on social media platforms. Mr. Bellad even held what he called "Mulla Moksha Homa", a homa to cleanse all government departments for allowing recitation of the Quran in a government programme. But it turned out that the facts were very different: The programme began with a rendition of a song dedicated to Lord Ganesha, after which verses of the Quran were also recited. Congress leaders had to come out with video proof of the rendition of prayer to rebut BJP's canard. But by that time the damage had already been done.

**Fixed time, but not for Revanna**

The Hassan district administration has made some changes with regard to the entry of VIPs and golden pass holders to the Hasanamba temple in Hassan this time. Every year, lakhs of devotees from different parts of Karnataka and outside visit the temple when it is opened for the annual festival, which normally begins after Vijayadashami and ends soon after Deepavali.

To ensure a smooth darshan for common devotees, VIPs can visit the temple only between 10.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m., as per the new norms. The arrangement was made to avoid private vehicles entering the premises. However, H.D. Revanna *(pictured)*, MLA, and his wife Bhavani Revanna chose not to follow it. As the police denied entry to the vehicle, they got down from the vehicle and walked to the temple. The MLA could be seen huffing and puffing and visibly upset with the arrangements that won praise from the common people.

**Promise sealed with a smile**

At a public meeting in Koppal recently, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was addressing a crowd after inaugurating and launching development projects worth ₹2,000 crore. Sitting on the dais was Basavaraj Rayaraddi, Yelburga MLA, and the CM's economic adviser – visibly restless, waiting for one specific announcement. His constituency, Yelburga, is one of the driest in the State and has long awaited irrigation. When he got an opportunity to address the gathering, Mr. Rayaraddi had made a plea asking the Chief Minister to publicly promise a project to fill tanks in his constituency by supplying water from the Tungabhadra.

When Mr. Siddaramaiah forgot to make an assurance, Housing Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan quietly slipped a note to the Chief Minister. Immediately, Mr. Siddaramaiah read it and turned to Mr. Rayaraddi and asked, "Did you write and send this note?" The crowd laughed. Then came the big moment: the Chief Minister announced a ₹650-crore project to fill 34 tanks across Yelburga. As the announcement was made, Mr. Rayaraddi folded his hands, and the crowd cheered.

*Girish Pattanashetti*
*Sathish G.T.*
*Kumar Buradikatti*

# ETH Zurich's leadership invited to next Quantum India Summit

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

The State government has deepened its international scientific engagement with ETH Zurich – one of the world's leading institutions in quantum science and technology – through a visit to the ETH Quantum Center and an invitation for its leadership to participate in the Quantum India Summit 2026 in Bengaluru.

During his visit, N.S. Boseraju, Minister for Science and Technology and Minor Irrigation, met Andreas Wallraff, Jonathan Home, and Klaus Ensslin, directors of the ETH Quantum Center.

The professors have been pioneering research in superconducting qubits and trapped ion systems for over two decades, according to a release from the Minister's office.

The Minister extended a personal invitation to Prof. Wallraff, widely regarded as a global trailblazer in quantum computing, to attend and contribute to the next edition of Quantum India Bengaluru.

"ETH Zurich stands among the birthplaces of modern quantum computing – where the world's foundational research in quantum science evolved into real, working technology. It is a privilege to connect Karnataka's emerging quantum ecosystem with such world-class expertise," said Mr. Boseraju.

The Karnataka delegation toured the superconducting qubit labs and trapped ion labs, gaining insights into how the ETH Quantum Center coordinates research across Switzerland through a collaborative model.

## OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

**DEATH**

Rest in peace

Leela Stellas
Passed away on 18.10.2025.
"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" - 2 Timothy 4:7.
Deeply mourned by
Son, daughter, daughter-in-law and grand children.
Ph: 9840475287, 9385593339

**DEATH ANNIVERSARIES**

2nd YEAR ANNIVERSARY

V.K. NATARAJAN
Memories of good times in your wonderful company, your kindness and affection stay with us.
Thank you for all this and more.
May your soul rest in eternal peace
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भारत सरकार - अंतरिक्ष विभाग / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA - DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण समूह, एसडीएससी-शार / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP, SDSC-SHAR
श्रीहरिकोटा / नेल्लूर (जिला), आं.प्र. / SRIHARIKOTA - 524124

संक्षिप्त ई–निविदा सूचना / Brief E-TENDER NOTICE

ई–निविदा सूचना सं./ e- Tender Notice No. SHAR / CMD / E / G 2587207 / 2025-26 तिथि/ Date. 16/10/2025

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से, "एसडीएससी में दूरमिति से पीसीएमसी रडार-II तक यूपीएस विद्युत आपूर्ति का विस्तार के लिए विद्युत कार्य। "(अनुमानितलागतः ₹ 92.96 लाख) के लिए ई–निविदा के माध्यम से मद दर निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा दस्तावेज 03.11.2025 को 14:30 बजे तक डाउनलोड किए जा सकते हैं। विस्तृत सूचना हेतु इच्छुक निविदाकार हमारी वेबसाइट www.isro.gov.in या www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO पर जा सकते हैं।

On behalf of President of India, Item Rate tenders are invited through e-tendering for "Electrical Works for extension of UPS power supply from Telemetry to PCMC Radar-II at SDSC SHAR." (Estimated cost: ₹ 92.96 Lakhs) ; Tender documents can be downloaded up to 03.11.2025, 14:30 hrs. Interested tenderer may visit www.isro.gov.in or www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO for details.

हस्ताक्षरित- समूह प्रधान, सीएमजी / एसडीएससी शार / Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG / SDSC SHAR

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, NEELSH ASATI, son of DP Asati, residing at 19 Sena Vihar, Kamanahalli Main Road, Bengaluru - 560043. I hereby declare that both the names NEELESH and NEELESH ASATI refer to me vide affidavit dated 17-Oct-2025 -Govt of Karnataka e-Stamp certificate number IN-KA72085355770874X. I intend to continue and retain my name in future as NEELESH ASATI

I, GEETA DEVI W/o Service number–14661609F, Rank–HAV, Name–Umashankar,residing at Baruntar–vill, Surajpura–po, Rohtas–dist, Bihar, pin–802221.I have changed my name from GEETA DEVI to GITA KUMARI vide affidavit dated 15–10–2025 before notary A.R Muneer Ahmed Bangalore

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDL. SENIOR CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT TUMAKUR
O.S. No. 858/2024
BETWEEN : Sri. Barkath Ali ...PLAINTIFF
AND : Sri. Aftab Ahamed & anr ...DEFENDANTS
DRAFT PAPER PUBLICATION
SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT No. 1
To, Sri. Aftab Ahamed S/o Naveeda and Zakir Hussain, No.37, Rajeshwari Layout, Opp. to BWSSB, Singapura Main Road, Near Aveksha Hospital, Vidyaranya Pura, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560097. Mobile No. 9886677711
And also. Sri. Aftab Ahamed S/o Naveeda and Zakir Hussain, R/at Noor Manzil, PID No. 1432, 10th Cross, Siddalingana Palya, Ward No.26, SIT, Tumkuru-572102.
...Defendant No. 1
Whereas the above suit for specific performance has been filed by the Plaintiff seeking a judgment and decree in favour of the Plaintiff and against Defendant No.1. Seeking Specific performance of the agreement of sale dated 13.02.2024, which is executed by Defendant No. 1 in favour of the plaintiff.
This Hon'ble Court by its order dated 13.10.2025 has ordered issuance of suit summons to you by substituted service. Therefore, you are hereby directed to appear and show cause as to why the suit should not be decreed as prayed for on 25.11.2025 at 11.00 AM, in person or by a pleader / Advocate duly instructed in the matter.
Take notice that, in default of your appearance on the day before mentioned, the suit will be heard and disposed of in your absence.
PLAINT SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the immovable Residential property bearing PID No. 1432, Khata No.4563/A/738, Ward No. 26 within the Tumkur Municipal Corporation limit, Old Katha No. 9458 and 9458/A, 4563/A, Situated at SIT formed in re-survey No.47/3 of Tumkur Village, Kasbah Hobli, Tumkur Taluk and Tumkur District, measuring East to West 20 feet and North to South 32 feet, totally measuring 640 square feet and the building constructed thereon of 480 square feet of RCC Roof, Mosaic flooring and jungle wood and bounded on:-
East by : property of Hariharaiah, West by : property of others, North by : Conservancy, South by : Road.
Given under my hand and the seal of this Court on this the 16th day of October 2025.
By order of the Court,
Senior Sheristedar, Senior Civil Judge & C.J.M. Court, Tumakuru.
Advocate for Plaintiff :
Venkateshappa & Viveka B., Advocate No. 6, First Floor, Samruddhi Complex, Ullal Main Road, Besides ICICI Bank, Near Mangaluru PU College, Muneshwara Nagar, Bengaluru-560056.

# LDF 'divided' over Kerala govt.'s move to seek PM SHRI funds

**The Hindu Bureau**
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

V. Sivankutty

The ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) appears divided over the Kerala government's move to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Union government to access the Prime Minister's Schools for Raising India (PM SHRI) government school modernisation funds, purportedly linked to compliance with the politically controversial National Education Policy (NEP).

Kerala is among the several non-BJP-ruled States, including West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, that have not signed up for PM SHRI funds based on the perception that it would be tantamount to complying with the NEP, which the national Opposition views as the Centre's political tool for infringing on the jurisdiction of provincial governments over general education, a Concurrent List subject.

However, General Education Minister V. Sivankutty on Sunday signalled a modification in the LDF's political line. He stated that signing the MoU did not signal that the Kerala government would comply with the NEP guidelines.

Mr. Sivankutty said he advocated a pragmatic approach without compromising the LDF's opposition to the NEP. The Minister noted that Kerala could ill afford to lose the ₹1,446 crore the Centre owed the State under the PM SHRI scheme.

"The State government bore the entire cost of school education, including the salaries of 7,000 teachers, with scarce help from the Centre.

The PM SHRI outlay would give Kerala a much-needed fiscal leg-up to expedite the modernisation of government schools, post-matric hostels, fund educational research, and increase endowments for underprivileged students," he said.

### CPI cries foul

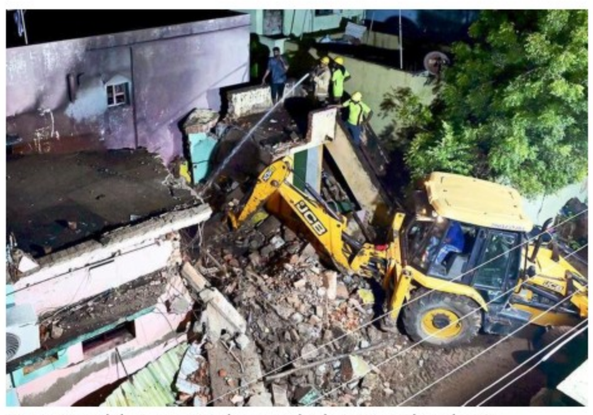
The Communist Party of India (CPI) has cried foul. CPI State Secretary Binoy Viswam told *The Hindu* that the government's last-minute decision to sign up for PM SHRI funds was fiscally non-beneficial.

He noted the 2022 PM SHRI scheme would expire in 2026-27. It and entailed no retrospective compensation. "Kerala would only receive meagre funds. However, political rivals could construe the government's bid as a nod to the Sangh Parivar's science-denying and reactionary NEP, which seeks to saffronise and corporatise education," Mr. Viswam said.

# Four killed in country-made firecracker explosion in T.N.

A house on Vivasaya Street at Thandurai near Pattabhiram, which also functioned as a shop selling country-made firecrackers, collapsed in the explosion that occurred around 3 p.m.

**The Hindu Bureau**
CHENNAI


Rescue work being carried out at the house at Thandurai in Pattabiram near Avadi on Sunday. VELANKANNI RAJ B.

Four persons were killed in an explosion at a house where country-made firecrackers were stored in Avadi on Sunday.

A senior officer of the Avadi police said the house on Vivasaya Street at Thandurai near Pattabhiram also functioned as a shop selling country-made firecrackers.

On Sunday, a group of people had come there to buy firecrackers for Deepavali. Around 3 p.m., a loud explosion was heard, and the concrete roof and a few other portions of the house collapsed in the blast.

On information, the Pattabhiram police and fire-fighters rushed to the spot and put out the fire. Four bodies were recovered from the house, and two of the victims were identified as D. Sunilprakash of Nathambedu, and A. Yasin of Nadukuthagai in Thiruninravur. The police said the two had come to buy firecrackers. The bodies were taken to the Government Kilpauk Medical College and Hospital for a post-mortem.

Avadi Police Commissioner K. Shankar inspected the site.

The police have cordoned off the area surrounding the house and are looking into the source of the firecrackers.

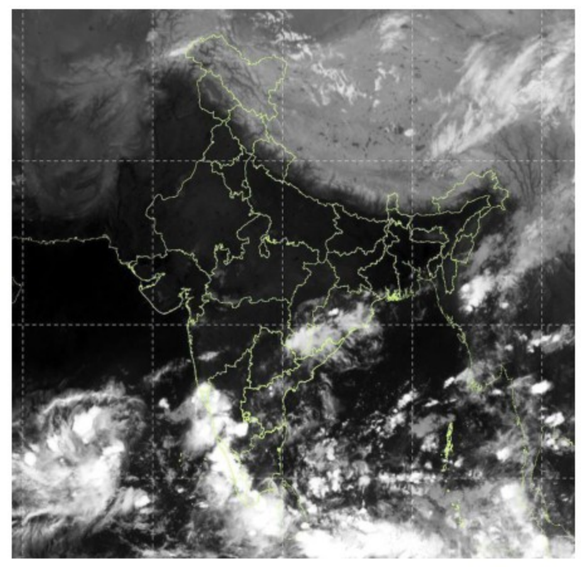
The police have asked the residents to report any such illegal storage of firecrackers or illegal firecracker shops in their localities.

A senior officer of the Avadi police said a shop, owned by A. Vijay, was known for selling country-made firecrackers for funeral processions and the Deepavali festival in the house belonging to his father Arumugam on Vivasaya Street at Thandurai.

A few persons had come there on Sunday to buy firecrackers for Deepavali.

## WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

**Forecast for Monday:** Heavy to very heavy rain likely at isolated places over Kerala & Mahe, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Puducherry & Karaikal, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu

| CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN | CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agartala | — | 34.2 | 25.0 | Kozhikode | 018.0 | 32.0 | 24.9 |
| Ahmedabad | — | 35.6 | 21.2 | Kurnool | — | 31.9 | 25.2 |
| Aizawl | 000.3 | 31.0 | 19.8 | Lucknow | — | 33.5 | 20.9 |
| Allahabad | — | 33.2 | 19.5 | Madurai | 011.0 | 32.7 | 23.5 |
| Bengaluru | 004.6 | 29.3 | 20.8 | Mangaluru | 021.0 | 31.2 | 23.2 |
| Bhopal | — | 31.2 | 19.2 | Mumbai | — | 35.8 | 24.6 |
| Bhubaneswar | 00.0 | 00.0 | 00.0 | Mysuru | 017.0 | 30.2 | 20.0 |
| Chandigarh | — | 34.4 | 17.2 | New Delhi | — | 30.7 | 20.0 |
| Chennai | 005.0 | 30.3 | 24.8 | Patna | — | 33.0 | 23.2 |
| Coimbatore | 009.0 | 32.0 | 22.2 | Port Blair | 006.0 | 30.3 | 24.7 |
| Dehradun | — | 32.1 | 16.8 | Puducherry | — | 31.9 | 25.0 |
| Gangtok | — | 23.7 | 14.1 | Pune | — | 32.3 | 20.0 |
| Goa | — | 33.8 | 26.0 | Raipur | — | 32.0 | 20.5 |
| Guwahati | — | 33.5 | 23.3 | Ranchi | — | 30.2 | 19.4 |
| Hubballi | — | 30.56 | 21.6 | Shillong | — | 24.8 | 14.5 |
| Hyderabad | — | 31.0 | 22.0 | Shimla | — | 26.4 | 14.8 |
| Imphal | — | 30.5 | 19.0 | Srinagar | — | 25.3 | 7.9 |
| Jaipur | — | — | 19.3 | Thiruvananthapuram | 021.0 | 29.0 | 23.6 |
| Kochi | — | 30.6 | 24.0 | Tiruchi | 001.0 | 31.1 | 24.5 |
| Kohima | 00.0 | 00.0 | 00.0 | Vijayawada | — | — | — |
| Kolkata | — | 34.2 | 19.4 | Visakhapatnam | 002.0 | 31.1 | 24.9 |

*(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)*

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

| CITIES | $SO_2$ | $NO_2$ | CO | PM2.5 | PM10 | CODE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ahmedabad | 6 | 21 | 22 | 165 | 123 | |
| Bengaluru | 9 | 47 | 60 | — | 89 | |
| Chennai | 2 | 2 | 50 | 191 | 132 | |
| Delhi | .66 | .43 | 70 | 350 | 430 | |
| Hyderabad | 6 | .28 | 14 | 182 | — | |
| Kolkata | 8 | .18 | 44 | 192 | 105 | |
| Lucknow | 5 | .47 | 61 | 207 | 151 | |
| Mumbai | 3 | .59 | 23 | 303 | 211 | |
| Pune | — | .23 | 25 | 305 | 181 | |
| Visakhapatnam | — | .24 | 11 | — | — | |

**Yesterday**

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 333 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 10

**Air Quality Code:** Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

**$SO_2$:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

**$NO_2$:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

**CO:** Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

**PM2.5 & PM10:** Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

# 'Slight' to Kumaraswamy: Janata Dal (S) leaders stage protest in Hassan

**The Hindu Bureau**
SHIVAMOGGA

Leaders of the Janata Dal-Secular (JD-S), led by legislators H.P. Swaroop and A. Manju, staged a protest in front of the main entrance to Hasanamba Temple in Hassan alleging that the district administration disrespected Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy during his visit to the temple on Friday, October 17.

The police intervened as the the MLAs and their followers tried to enter the temple premises by removing the barricades. The protesters wanted the Deputy Commissioner to come to the place and respond to them. They continued the protest despite rains. MLA for Hassan H.P. Swaroop said that officers did not welcome Mr. Kumaraswamy during the latter's visit to the temple. No one was there from the district administration to receive the Union Minister at the temple, Mr. Swaroop claimed.

Further, Mr. Swaroop alleged that the district administration did not invite him to inaugurate the cultural events organised as part of the Hasanamba festival. "Being the MLA, I should have been invited to preside over the programme. But the officers did not inform me," he said. The Hasanamba festival began on October 9, and will conclude on October 23. Lakhs of people from different parts of the State and outside have visited the temple during the festival. The temple will be closed on the last day of the festival.

Deputy Commissioner K.S. Lathakumari met the protesters and told them that the district administration treated the Union Minister in the same way as they treated other dignitaries.

# Khurshid gets Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award

**The Hindu Bureau**
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy inaugurated the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Yatra Commemoration held at Charminar on Sunday.

During the programme, the Chief Minister presented the "Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award" to former Union Minister Salman Khurshid for his contributions to promoting harmony and national unity. He said that Mr. Khurshid's association with the Gandhi family spans three generations.

"It is a matter of pride for all of us that Salman Khurshid is receiving the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award," Mr. Reddy said.

## *Devotion on the peak*

**Trek-cum-pilgrimage:** Devotees taking part in the annual Bindiga Deviramma hill trek in Chikkamagaluru on Sunday. PTI

# Kerala HC directs TDB to shift to digitised accounting

**John L. Paul**
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court has directed the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) to shift to a digitised accounting system to modernise the Board's accounting practices and ensure financial discipline.

The Division Bench issued the directive while considering a report of the State audit department regarding alleged objections to paying pension benefits to an employee who had retired in 2017 as Deputy Devaswom Commissioner.

The court was informed that audit objections had been raised, citing a liability of over ₹7 lakh, as many vouchers relating to his accounts were reportedly missing. Following this, the court summoned the

The HC expressed concern over the reliance on archaic manual registers by the TDB

officers concerned to present an action plan outlining the steps to implement modern accounting and auditing practices, including software systems and digital maintenance of records.

A perusal of broader issues regarding the TDB's financial administration showed that the audit report pertaining to the accounts of 150 temples, schools, and other institutions under the board was incomplete even now. Expressing concern over the continuing reliance on archaic manual registers and paper vouchers, the court said these enabled potential falsification and misappropriation of funds.

The failure to conduct timely audits reflected gross administrative indifference. Such neglect had rendered the board a passive enabler and an active participant in financial indiscipline.

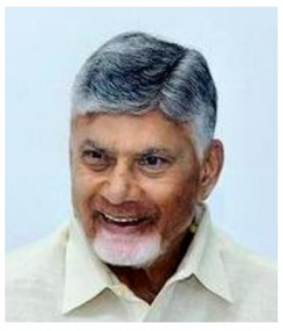
The divine assets of temples cannot be left vulnerable to outdated ledgers and missing records, the court added and directed the Director of the Audit department to appear before it on October 30.

# A.P. is recovering, thanks to Centre's support: Naidu

**The Hindu Bureau**
VIJAYAWADA

People have pulled the curtains down on the "dark rule (of YSR Congress Party)" by giving the TDP-Jana Sena Party-BJP alliance a mandate unheard of in a very long time, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said.

Participating in the Deepavali celebrations at the Punnami Ghat here on Sunday, Mr. Naidu asserted that Andhra Pradesh was recovering from the difficulties it had been facing since bifurcation more than a decade ago.


N. Chandrababu Naidu

The Union government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi supported A.P. by all possible means, because of which the State's finances were back on track, he said. The State government implemented the Super Six schemes and was also giving many benefits beyond those schemes, he said.

The government sanctioned one Dearness Allowance and one surrender leave to the employees and police personnel, and it was streamlining the Employees' Health Scheme.

Mr. Naidu said the GST 2.0 reforms came as a boon for businesses and the common people, and claimed that each family was able to save up to ₹15,000.

He wished that A.P. should become an 'AI State', and expressed his resolve to develop Amaravati as a model capital city.

# Jolle-Jarkiholi faction clashes with Katti-Savadi group during bank polls

**The Hindu Bureau**
BELAGAVI

Some followers of the Jolle-Jarkiholi panel and the Katti-Savadi faction came to blows over missing delegation forms in the District Central Cooperative Bank elections in Belagavi on Sunday.

However, the poll process was not disrupted. Returning Officer Sharavan Nayak said that polling and counting were peacefully completed.

Some candidates and followers of the Katti-Savadi panel said that their opponents stole delegation forms, which are used as voter identity cards, of

Followers of the Katti-Savadi panel and the Jolle-Jarkiholi faction indulge in fisticuffs during polling in Belagavi on Sunday. P.K. BADIGER

nearly 40 members in Raibag constituency.

They also said that some followers of Anna Saheb Jolle and Balachandra Jarkiholi pushed around some followers of Ramesh Katti and Laxman Savadi when they approached the election office to seek these forms.

In turn, the Jolle-Jarkiholi faction said that their opponents sent some miscreants only to create confusion among the voters. What started as a verbal exchange grew into a fight between some people where they tried to stop others from speaking. The groups came to blows on the BK Model High School Grounds that served as the polling centre for the bank.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Narayan Baramani arrived with his team and defused the situation. He asked the Katti-Savadi supporters to file a complaint with the Returning Officer if they had any grievance.

There was also a minor scuffle at a private hotel on Belgaum Club Road where some of the leaders are camping. Later, a team of 15 members from the Katti-Savadi group filed a complaint about theft of 24 delegation forms. They also said that they will register a police complaint.

# Kavitha's son takes part in protest, sparks political buzz

**The Hindu Bureau**
HYDERABAD

The third generation of Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) chief Kalvakuntla Chandrashekhar Rao's family is all set to take a plunge into politics, it is believed, going by the surprise appearance of Aditya, son of MLC and Telangana Jagruthi president Kalvakuntal Kavitha, at a political event.

Mr. Aditya was seen at the Telangana Jagruthi's protest during the Statewide Bandh demanding 42% reservations for Backward Classes on Saturday.

## Fire in the sky

### Green crackers are a compromise between joyful festivities, public health

This Deepavali, firecrackers are being burst under legal sanction in Delhi. The Supreme Court of India, in an order last week, modified a ban it had sanctioned since 2018, allowing the use of green crackers during the festival. While the decision comes with caveats on implementation, it underscores the continuous challenge that authorities face in dealing with pressures from cultural norms and economic activity while prioritising public health and environmental safety. The re-introduction of legally sanctioned, less-polluting options marks a shift in government policy after the Bharatiya Janata Party came to power and aims to accommodate traditional celebrations while acknowledging the severe environmental impact of conventional fireworks in Delhi, which is disproportionately affected by noxious winter air. This move recognises that the use of fireworks is an integral cultural expression of joy during the festival of lights. Furthermore, the firecracker industry supports the livelihoods of lakhs of people, making economic considerations part of the regulatory landscape.

However, as the history of Delhi's air pollution shows, the battle for clean air is a complex interplay of meteorology, economic structure, population and geography. Multiple expert bodies and task forces have deployed science and widespread measurement – at a scale few cities in the world have attempted – to conclude that air quality is impacted by diverse sources: transport, industry, agriculture-waste burning, biomass burning, construction and road dust at different periods. Evidence also suggests that intervals of extended rains often have the largest effect on improving average air quality levels. While the contribution of firecrackers to the annual pollution problem may be temporary, data confirm that the resultant spike makes an already bad air situation worse. Allowing the use of scientifically developed 'green' crackers – which are estimated to be about two-thirds less noxious – is an effort to tolerate a temporary surge under controlled conditions. This approach seeks to find a middle ground between honouring tradition and minimising harm. But while green crackers represent an improvement over conventional ones, they are not zero-emission products. In legalising this less-effulgent option, governments and courts must be careful not to take the focus away from the need for public commitment to stricter environmental norms rooted in science and reason, and not in hope and faith. There is no alternative to comprehensive, consistent action against all sources of pollution.

## For a new path

### With the surrender of key Maoist leaders, peace is now possible

That the Maoist insurgency is on the back foot has been evident for months now. The Maoist presence has been limited to 11 districts, with its core areas whittled down to three – the forested and remote districts of Bijapur, Narayanpur and Sukma in Chhattisgarh. The credit for weakening what was once termed India's "greatest internal security threat" must be shared by security forces that adapted counter-insurgency tactics to the realities on the ground, and district administrations and successive governments since the mid-2000s which accelerated developmental work. The defeat of the Maoists in hitherto impoverished tribal regions of central India followed a similar retreat from united Andhra Pradesh, which saw the same strategy. This made it near impossible for the insurgents to build alternative governance structures, eventually encircling cities – a plan followed by the Chinese Communist Party a century ago to defeat the Nationalists. The Maoists aimed to form base areas in remote districts of central and north-central India, in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, eastern Maharashtra, western Odisha and northern Andhra Pradesh. They expected support from tribals, many nursing disaffection due to the absence of the state and its developmental arms.

While areas such as Abujhmad in south Chhattisgarh, Gadchiroli in Maharashtra and parts of Odisha initially provided conditions for the Maoists to establish alternative institutions, over time, tribal unrest grew, with resentment over being used as pawns in militarist battles against the Indian state. This was partly because the Maoists privileged armed struggle over the economic uplift of tribals. The Maoists gained strength in the late 2000s when the Salwa Judum campaign resulted in massive displacement and brutal internecine battles, providing discontented recruits. However, the Supreme Court's ban on the campaign and the professionalisation of anti-insurgency forces weakened the militant insurgency. Simultaneously, tribal people saw more benefits from a proactive state – despite persisting limitations – leading to growing disillusionment with the Maoist idea of a violent route towards an alternative state. This experience mirrors what transpired in Peru, Colombia, the Philippines and Malaysia. That this realisation has dawned upon senior Maoist leaders is evident when surrendered Politburo member Mallojula Venugopal Rao suggested that the only task left was to "abandon the dogmatic practice of the Chinese and Russian lines, regardless of the change in circumstances and time [in India]". This opens the opportunity for the cadres to utilise spaces within Indian democracy for political engagement. Even if it has not convinced all the insurgents as yet, it will serve the people of the remaining districts and those committed to their uplift well if the Maoists abandon their struggle.

# The far-right's infiltration into the West's mainstream

**Abhishek Roy Choudhury**

is a German Chancellor Fellow with the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and writes on the Global South, geopolitics and the digital-policy landscape

For years, western capitals invoked the Enlightenment – liberty, equality, reason – as their moral compass. Across the trans-Atlantic world today, ideas long parked on the fringes, nativism, ethno-nationalism, and hardline "law and order", increasingly shape prime-time debate. This is not a sudden rupture but a gradual normalisation, election by election and motion by motion, testing whether democracies that preached tolerance abroad can still defend it at home.

**Normalising once-fringe hardline agendas**

Italy has a far-right Prime Minister in Giorgia Meloni, the first since the Second World War. In France, Marine Le Pen's National Rally has shed its outcast tag, taking 41% in the 2022 runoff and often leading opinion polls. Germany's Alternative for Germany (AfD), long kept at arm's length, has topped national surveys, won its first district office, and even the present ruling party of Germany had relied on AfD votes to pass hard-line migration motions, breaching a post-war taboo. In the Nordics, the Sweden Democrats and Finland's Finns Party are no longer gatecrashers but kingmakers, trading support for tougher immigration rules. Mainstream political trends in Hungary and Poland have normalised a nationalist turn. On the Iberian rim, Spain's Vox and Portugal's Chega are gaining ground. What began as protest is edging into power, recasting the centre, not with a single sweep, but through steady local wins and tactical coalitions that shift policy first and politics after. Even where they do not hold power outright, they are dragging the political centre rightward. Traditional conservative parties, desperate to stem the loss of voters, increasingly echo hard-right positions on issues such as immigration, multiculturalism and "law and order". The "Unite the Kingdom" march in London in September, organised by far-right activist Tommy Robinson, drew around 1,10,000 people, one of the largest right-wing demonstrations in recent memory. Mr. Robinson and allied commentators argue that there is a "two-tier policing" regime that treats right-wing protesters more harshly than others, casting their mobilisation as a free-speech defence and themselves as victims of an establishment double standard.

> The question is whether the trans-Atlantic world can challenge this ascent and live up to its professed values

In the United States, the rightward drift is no longer atmospheric; it is administrative now. Since January 20, 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump has moved on multiple fronts: an order to constrict birthright citizenship, now tied up in litigation; the resurrection of "Schedule F," reopening the door to sweeping political control over policy posts; a Justice Department push asking the Supreme Court to lock passports to sex assigned at birth; and a headline-grabbing move to slap a $1,00,000 charge on new H-1B visa petitions. Each step signals a project to hard-wire ideology into rules and paperwork. Meanwhile, ideas once confined to the fringe, the 'replacement' conspiracy and talk of an immigrant 'invasion', now echo in prime time and from elected officials, blurring the boundary between protest and policy. Together, policy levers and grievance politics are pulling the Republican party's centre of gravity further right, and dragging the national conversation with it.

A democratic counter-strategy should be sober, not alarmist. Four priorities which need to stand out. First, the need to address material grievances on inflation, public safety, service strain - without scapegoating migrants or minorities. Welfare-chauvinism is politically seductive but fiscally thin for the long term.

Second, maintain the firewall with no Faustian pacts. Short-term parliamentary wins that rely on extremist votes erode long-term democratic norms.

Third, responsibility in media and tech platforms which needs to amplify verified information, throttle demonstrable falsehoods, and insist on context when airing incendiary claims such as "two-tier policing".

Fourth, civic courage for ordinary citizens, institutions, and mainstream parties who must defend equal citizenship and pluralism, principles that have served open societies well.

**The stakes for India**

For India, the stakes are concrete now. The U.K.'s grievance-driven street politics intersects with diaspora safety and social cohesion. Continental Europe's hardening on migration and identity can shape visa regimes for students and skilled workers, as well as attitudes toward multiculturalism. The U.S. H-1B surcharge – if it remains in force after litigation and potential congressional scrutiny – directly raises costs for Indian professionals and firms, potentially diverting investment and talent flows. India also has a diplomatic interest in the quality of liberal democracy among key partners. When mainstream actors chase fringe talking points to protect vote banks, they shift the Overton window on pluralism, media independence and human rights – the very norms that underpin predictable partnerships, research ties and people-to-people links. That has knock-on effects for Indian students, businesses and long-standing communities abroad.

**History and a caution**

To be sure, the far-right's ascent has not gone unchallenged. Citizens, activists and leaders continue to push back –in Germany, Spain and elsewhere, crowds have gathered to say that hate is not welcome, while courts and journalists have exposed abuses that thrive in the shadows. In several western countries, broad alliances have been forged to keep extremists from power, as France's mainstream did against Marine Le Pen. The ideals are not dead yet, but they do need stewards. The question is whether the trans-Atlantic world will live up to its professed values or allow fear to erode gains won over generations. History's caution is plain – Europe's 1930s showed how a modern society can abandon liberal norms under the spell of demagoguery. The post-war order was built precisely to avoid that slide. Meeting this moment will require sober self-correction: listening to real economic and cultural anxieties without turning them into vendettas; resisting the temptation to launder fringe ideas through expedient coalitions; insisting on accuracy in public debate; and renewing everyday solidarities across lines of difference. Democracies are strongest when they protect the equal dignity of all. Equality, pluralism and reason remain the surest compass if we choose to follow it.

*The views expressed are personal*

# The new arc of India-Australia collaboration

**Harsh V. Pant**

is Vice-President – Studies and Foreign Policy at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, and Professor of International Relations at King's College London

**Pratnashree Basu**

is an Associate Fellow, Indo-Pacific, at the Observer Research Foundation

India's recent defence engagement with Australia reached a new milestone during Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's visit to Canberra and Sydney earlier this month for the inaugural Australia-India Defence Ministers' Dialogue. The visit, the first by an Indian Defence Minister to Australia in over a decade, produced key defence agreements that upgrade the relationship from declaratory strategic convergence toward greater operational cooperation. The discussions included a Joint Maritime Security Collaboration Roadmap to advance maritime cooperation, as well as renewing and strengthening the Joint Declaration on Defence and Security Cooperation.

Talks also covered an annual Defence Ministers' Dialogue, an Implementing Arrangement on Mutual Submarine Rescue Support and Cooperation, progress on operationalising the Australia-India Implementing Arrangement on Air-to-Air Refuelling signed in 2024, expanded information-sharing, and the establishment of Joint Staff Talks as a forum to progress joint exercises, operations and interoperability across domains.

**A deepening partnership**

What makes these outcomes notable is their operational and industrial content. The submarine-rescue arrangement and Joint Staff Talks establish mechanisms for coordinated responses and contingency planning at sea; the air-to-air refuelling implementation and increased interoperability commitments improve tactical reach and combined air operations; and defence-industry round tables and offers by India's shipyards to support Australian fleet maintenance crystallise a logistics- and sustainment-oriented partnership rather than just high-level signalling. These are practical building blocks that enable more frequent, routinised cooperation across the Indian Ocean and western Pacific littorals.

The India-Australia defence relationship has been evolving in three phases that help explain why this visit mattered.

First, strategic convergence. India and Australia's shared concerns about China's unlawful assertions and the health of a rules-based Indo-Pacific have created recurrent diplomatic convergence through the Quad (Australia, India, Japan, United States) and ministerial dialogues. Second, a deepening of operational ties. The last several years saw growing exercise participation, information-sharing and logistics conversations (including bilateral talks on air refuelling and exercises such as Talisman Sabre), which laid the groundwork for devising mechanisms during the current meeting.

> Key defence agreements will result in a shared, stable and more routine model of cooperation

Third, industrial and logistics convergence. Both capitals have started looking beyond bilateral exercises to maintenance, defence industry collaboration and securing supply chains, and turning occasional interoperability into longer-term sustenance. The trajectory of the bilateral defence partnership is, hence, evidently moving from warm words to a shared maritime operating model.

**The critical reasons**

The drivers behind this acceleration are both structural and pragmatic. Structurally, the changing balance of maritime power and Beijing's more coercive behaviour have incentivised middle powers to reduce operational gaps and create redundancy in defence linkages.

Practically, uncertainties about the reliability of any single external security provider have prompted India and Australia to strengthen their bilateral mechanisms, including logistics support, rescue cooperation and defence industrial ties, thereby reducing the operational friction costs associated with crisis cooperation. The developments concerning AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom, and the U.S.) and Australia's growing access to advanced platforms also created new demand for interoperability with regional partners, which is an opportunity that India can partially fill given its shipbuilding and repair capabilities.

India and Australia's defence partnership rests on a fusion of complementary strengths – India's scale and geography with Australia's technology and innovation. India's defence production reached a record ₹1.5 lakh crore in FY 2024-25, reflecting the success of its "Make in India" and Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) initiatives that have built a cost-effective, innovation-driven industrial ecosystem.

Its maritime geography, astride vital sea lanes in the Indian Ocean, and growing capabilities in domain awareness, logistics and submarine rescue give India significant regional reach. Australia, meanwhile, complements this with advanced maritime and undersea technologies, including the P-8A Poseidon, MQ-4C Triton, and the "Ghost Shark" autonomous submarine. Supported by strong research and development Canberra brings technological depth and alliance-linked expertise. Together, India's industrial capacity and cost advantages align with Australia's high-end systems and innovation, creating a resilient, mutually reinforcing defence relationship. This synergy enhances the ability of both countries to sustain operations, co-develop technologies, and shape a stable Indo-Pacific maritime order.

Political economy and foreign policy signalling also matter. The relationship, initially elevated to a Strategic Partnership in 2009 and further advanced to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) in 2020, rests on a foundation of shared democratic values, expanding economic linkages, and deepening people-to-people connections.

For Canberra, deepening ties with New Delhi diversifies security partnerships in the Indo-Pacific. For New Delhi, Australia is a like-minded partner that can expand India's reach in the southern Indo-Pacific while bolstering maritime domain awareness and industrial cooperation. At the bureaucratic level, creating annual ministerial and joint staff mechanisms institutionalises the relationship so that cooperation survives political cycles and episodic strategic disruptions.

**Looking ahead**

The discussions during Mr. Singh's visit are significant but calibrated while being incremental, reversible and oriented toward interoperability and crisis management rather than binding security guarantees. The following steps to watch would be the pace of implementing logistics and ship-repair arrangements, the depth of classified information-sharing frameworks, concrete defence-industrial joint projects, and how Canberra and New Delhi align these practical ties with broader Quad activity.

If implemented steadily, the arrangements signed during the visit will make India-Australia defence cooperation more routinised, operationally meaningful, and strategically consequential for Indo-Pacific maritime stability.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Engaging Kabul**

'Talking to the Taliban' should sensitise all concerned within the ruling dispensation. Now, attempting to restore a normal diplomatic relationship with the Taliban regime in Afghanistan does make one wonder whether India is serious about ending terror. India should remember that the Taliban government is not a democratically elected one and that rights are being suppressed in Afghanistan. India should be careful if it is serious about its claim of being a 'Viswaguru'.

**A.G. Rajmohan,**
Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh

Today, India has chosen calibrated engagement over isolation. Yet, the silence on the Taliban's repression of women and minorities is deeply troubling. Strategic pragmatism cannot come at the cost of India's moral voice. As Afghanistan's neighbour and historic partner, India must back its outreach with advocacy for human rights and education — especially for women and girls.

Engagement must serve a dual purpose: securing India's regional interests while upholding its democratic ideals. To do less would be to barter principle for expediency — a trade neither worthy of India's legacy nor of Afghanistan's people.

**Gopalaswamy J.,**
Chennai

**India-China ties**

The writer of the article, "Better global governance, led by China and India" (Editorial page, October 18), is undoubtedly a skilful wordsmith. But in this relationship, it is actions, not words, that are key. I wonder what the residents of Arunachal Pradesh feel about sentences such as "domestic affairs free from external interference". There is conveniently no mention about the Dalai Lama and the oppression of Tibet. India's leaders of all persuasions should justly be proud of standing up to Chinese aggression in this regard. Although Myanmar is a separate issue, the Chinese support for a brutal military junta has daily repercussions for Indian citizens living near that border. The less said about how Pakistan is in China's pocket the better.

Admittedly, most Chinese people I have had the pleasure of meeting and working with are sincere, thoughtful and proud people who are contributing to India's economy. However, the political apparatus needs root and branch reforms. As we all tackle climate emergencies, China's solar prowess is valuable, but one must always be aware of the negative aspects of its so-called "governance".

**J.G. Roy,**
Pune

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

# From Middle Earth to military earth

Vasudevan Mukunth

In no small part, the richly imagined and detailed mythology of British writer J.R.R. Tolkien was born of his revulsion towards mechanised warfare and industrialisation, yet today, pieces of it have been appropriated to serve ideologies that advance the same forces.

**Ironic names**

Recently, a private company, Reflect Orbital, announced plans to launch a satellite called Earendil-1, which it said would reflect sunlight from orbit around the earth towards the ground, in a bid to increase the efficiency of solar cells. Eärendil is a legendary voyager and a bearer of light through the heavens in Tolkien's cosmology. Even before launch, Reflect's project has raised questions about governing orbital debris, ownership of reflected energy, and light pollution.

Earlier this year, two other U.S.-based companies – Palantir Technologies and Anduril Industries – expressed interest in participating in U.S. President Donald Trump's ambitious 'Golden Dome' missile defence system. Palantir was founded in 2003 with early backing from the Central Intelligence Agency's venture arm. Its flagship platform enables predictive policing and counterterrorism analysis. The name comes from palantíri, the "seeing stones" of Tolkien's legendarium, capable of granting vision across large distances but which are also susceptible to manipulation by the forces of darkness. Anduril, established in 2017, develops autonomous surveillance towers and drone systems for the U.S. Department of Defense. Its name is from Andúril, a sword in Tolkien's narrative known as "the Flame of the West".

In Palantir's case, both the fictional object and the company revolve around the surveying of distant subjects, relying on information asymmetry, and raising questions about who gets to watch and who is watched. In Anduril's, while the sword in the story is the means by which a single claimant to a great kingdom consolidates power, the company's systems centralise decision-making about detection and response in algorithmic form. Both make unilateral authority appear politically justified.

Peter Thiel, an early investor in both Palantir and Anduril, has compared the dynamics of modern technology to Tolkien's portrayal of power. In a 2009 essay, he invoked the tension between the Shire's stability and Mordor's will to mastery (the archetypal 'good' and 'bad' places in the story) as a metaphor for Silicon Valley's role in reshaping the world. The metaphor has persisted across Thiel-affiliated ventures.

The consequences for how the public engages with Tolkien's fiction are important. As a veteran of the Battle of the Somme, Tolkien witnessed industrial destruction firsthand, and later reshaped those memories into the ecological ruin spread by Sauron, the dark lord and eponymous antagonist of the *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Tolkien believed, as a Catholic, in the sanctity of creation and distrusted any power that ruled through machines and bureaucracy. Today, however, names such as Palantir are entering news cycles through stories about data surveillance, autonomous weapons, and military contractors. Readers who encounter them outside their literary context will thus encounter them first as instruments of control.

Tolkien's works have long drawn readers from a wide demographic. But when parts of his mythology are appropriated by entities associated with irrational and violent ideologies, the imaginative space those works once provided can become narrow. The names suddenly carry connotations of militarism or technocratic dominance, and the association with certain investors and ideological currents could introduce a new layer of political discomfort.

Academic studies of his corpus have so far examined its relation to myth-making, linguistics, and post-war British culture. Scholars and journalists have also found instances of white-nationalist and neoreactionary circles reinterpreting Tolkien's mythologies as cultural allegory. In these readings, the struggles of Middle Earth – the world where the *The Long of the Rings* trilogy is set – are recast as defences of racial or civilisational purity, with the plight of the Shire and Gondor imagined as metaphors for a threatened Western order. By drawing Tolkien's lexicon into political economies of the 21st century, figures such as Thiel are cloaking coercive technologies in the moral grandeur of epic struggle while implying that their creators, like Tolkien's heroes, are destined to wield exceptional power responsibly.

**A modern habit**

These patterns are ultimately part of a broader modern habit of converting mythic materials into corporate or technological lingo. Greek and Norse myths have long served as sources of names for military projects, spacecraft, and digital products – Apollo, Athena, Odin, Thor, etc. Similar trends have emerged in India, where the names of Indic entities are being applied to military, technological, and institutional projects. Even if they aren't instances of full-blown appropriation in the manner of Tolkien's lore, they harbour a broader logic of mapping cultural authority onto power. An example is Varunastra, an "autonomous heavyweight anti-submarine torpedo" developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation.

This is a tactic to use the imaginative authority of myth to buttress contemporary instruments of violence, control, and projection. The misfortune, however, is that they are dragging precious pieces of literature down with them.

The imaginative authority of myth is being used to buttress contemporary instruments of violence, control, and projection

# Tackling caste pride and prejudice

Instead of addressing a sad reality, political parties have reinforced caste identities

STATE OF PLAY

B. Kolappan
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After months of inaction, the DMK government in Tamil Nadu, under pressure from its allies – the CPI, CPI(M), and the Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) – has finally agreed to consider legislation targeting caste-based hate crimes and so-called 'honour' killings.

Inter-caste couples, especially those involving a Scheduled Caste (SC), often face deadly backlash in Tamil Nadu, where caste pride has fuelled numerous killings. The most sensational case recently was the killing of Kavin Selvaganesh, a young software professional, by the brother of the girl he loved. Kavin belonged to a SC community, while the girl was from a dominant Hindu community.

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin had earlier argued that a separate law to deal with such crimes was not necessary, as existing laws were adequate. However, last week, while speaking on the floor of the State Assembly, he announced that a Commission headed by retired Madras High Court judge, Justice K.N. Basha, would be constituted. The Commission of several experts will hold consultations and submit recommendations to the government on enacting legislation. This move has effectively bought the government some more time on a highly sensitive issue, especially with Assembly elections scheduled next year. As the State government cannot take a decision on enacting a law without taking various stakeholders into confidence, it is left to the Commission to evolve a consensus before




making its recommendations.

There are two types of killings in the name of upholding caste pride: while some involve killing members of one's own family or community, others involve killings members of another community to avenge the perceived insult to one's own caste pride.

P. Shanmugam, secretary of the Tamil Nadu unit of the CPI(M), said since 2016, his party had fought for justice in 118 such cases. "There may be an equal number of unreported or suppressed cases," said Mr. Shanmugam, who, along with the leaders of the CPI and the VCK, met Mr. Stalin to press for a law. The CPI(M) has also launched Tamil Nadu Untouchability Eradication Front to carry forward its campaign against casteism. Mr. Shanmugam said Mr. Stalin's announcement was a step forward.

The argument against a separate law to prevent killing for honour is that it could be misused. It is not just the DMK; most political parties are unable to take a clear stand on the matter for fear of alienating their support base, especially among politically and economically empowered intermediate communities. Whenever such killings take place, political parties stay silent or react cautiously.

The deaths of Ilavarasan (2013), Shankar (2016), and Ramachandran (2025) have intensified the demand for a separate legislation. That such a demand had to be made repeatedly in a State known for social justice is shocking. Periyar, the founder of the Dravidar Kazhagam, waged a war against casteism and encouraged inter-caste and self-respect marriages, without any rituals. When the DMK government headed by C.N. Annadurai came to power, it modified the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, by inserting Section 7-A to legalise inter-caste marriages. In March 2025, the Minister for Commercial Taxes and Registration, P. Moorthy, said that 12,114 self-respect marriages had been registered in the State since 2018. He said steps were being taken to ensure the registration of self-respect marriages under Section 7-A of the Act at all sub-registrar offices in Tamil Nadu.

A State that enacted a law to legalise self-respect marriages cannot seem to bring itself to enact a law to protect couples marrying outside their community; this speaks volumes about the power of intermediate communities. It is not that all inter-caste marriages are targeted, but marriages involving SCs trigger deadly responses. It also exposes the harsh reality that, despite Tamil Nadu's urbanisation and progress in many fields, marrying a Dalit remains taboo. This is a reflection of deep-rooted caste identities and the pride still tied to one's caste.

Instead of showing courage in dealing with this reality, political parties instead reinforce caste identities through their electoral strategies and Cabinet formation. They field candidates based on community demographics and even proudly state that they have honoured a community by accommodating more representatives from it. In a way, they have made caste identity all the more relevant.

# Record fatalities, arrests, surrenders signal decline of Maoist insurgency

The reduction in the geographic spread of Maoist activity has accelerated in recent years

DATA POINT

Janavi Visagan
Sambavi Parthasarathy
Vignesh Radhakrishnan

Following a series of counter-insurgency operations and a wave of surrenders and arrests, India's decades-old Maoist insurgency has significantly weakened, data show. This year, all three key metrics – the number of militants killed, arrested, and surrendered – recorded new highs.

The number of militants who have surrendered in 2025 stands at 1,849 – the third-highest annual total since 2000, surpassed only by the figures in 2016 and 2022 **(Chart 1)**.

Nearly 836 Maoists have been arrested this year, the highest since 2017. However, the arrests of Maoists were in general higher in the 2000s and 2010s than in the 2020s. In the 2000s, an average of 663 Maoists were arrested per year; and in the 2010s, 777 were arrested per year. In the 2020s, the average figure fell to 496 per year.

With 333 fatalities, 2025 has become the second-deadliest year for Maoists since 2000, surpassed only by the peak of 343 deaths recorded in 2006 **(Chart 3).**

The reduction in the geographic spread of Maoist activity has accelerated in recent years. In 2013, there were 175 districts affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE) **(Map 1),** shows government data. This included 29 districts from Bihar, 24 from Jharkhand, 21 from Chhattisgarh, 19 from Odisha, and 11 each from Chhattisgarh and West Bengal.

In 2018, the number of districts declined to 60 **(Map 2).** This included 18 districts from Jharkhand, 12 from Chhattisgarh, 12 from Odisha and 10 from Bihar.

In 2025, the number came down to 11 **(Map 3).** This included seven in Chhattisgarh and one each from Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha.

## Shrinking red corridor

The data for the charts were sourced from the South Asia Terrorism Portal. SATP is the largest website on terrorism and low intensity warfare in South Asia, and creates the database and analytic context for research and analysis of all extremist movements in the region.

*Janavi Visagan is interning with the Hindu Data Team*

**Chart 1:** The number of militants who surrendered across India over the years

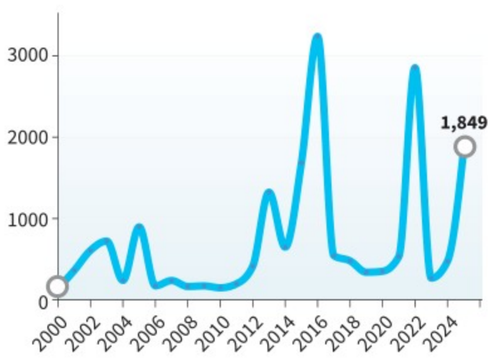



**Chart 2:** The number of militants who were arrested across India over the years

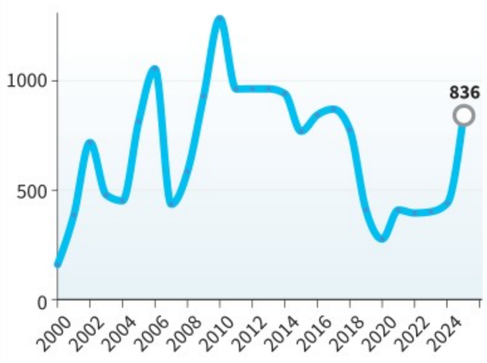
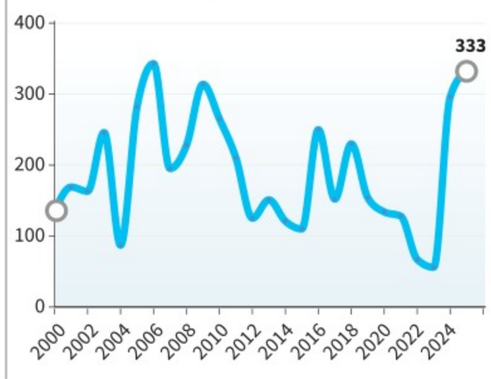
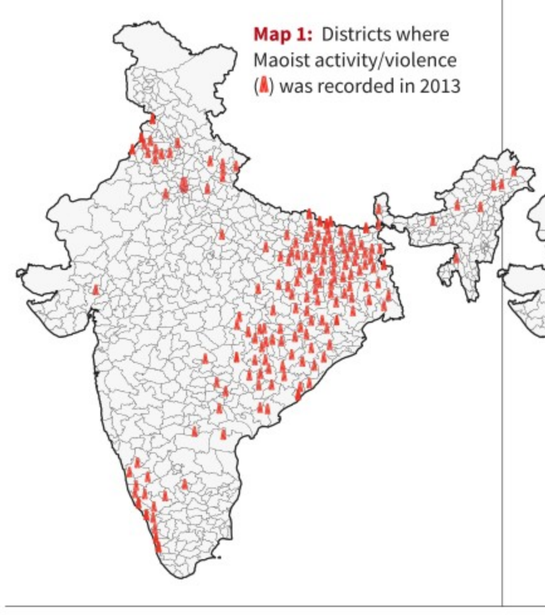


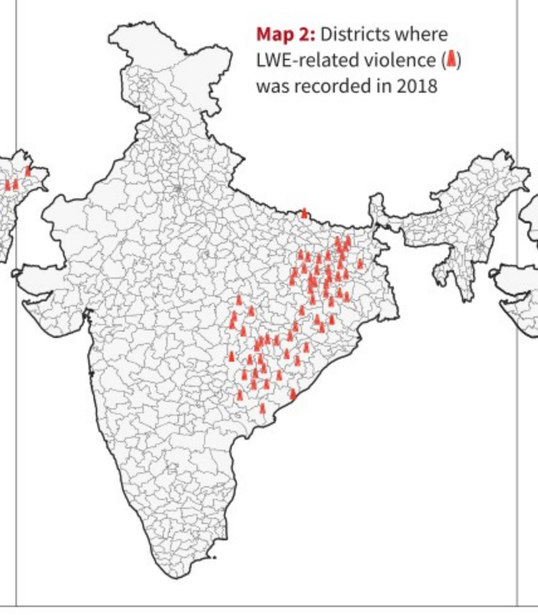

**Chart 3:** The number of militants who were killed across India over the years



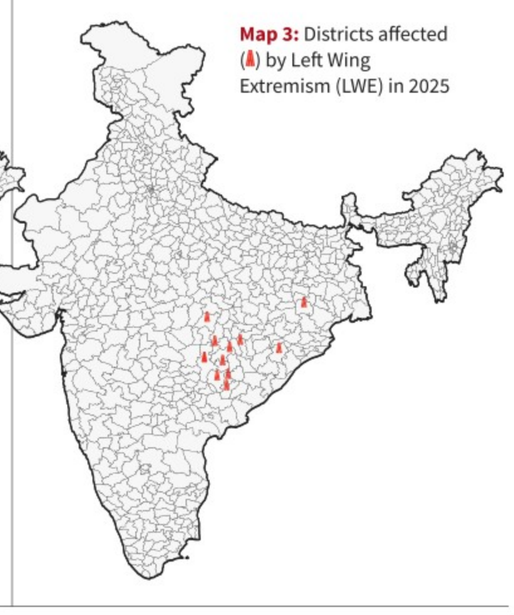

**Map 1:** Districts where Maoist activity/violence (▲) was recorded in 2013



**Map 2:** Districts where LWE-related violence (▲) was recorded in 2018



**Map 3:** Districts affected (▲) by Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in 2025



FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO OCTOBER 20, 1975

## Aryabhata gathers significant data

Bangalore, Oct. 18: Aryabhata, India's first satellite, has completed six months in orbit to-day, with 2,740 orbits round the earth and staying in space for over 4,300 hours. In a review of its performance, the Indian Space Research Organisation claimed that the Aryabhata project had fulfiled its objectives. Nearly 80 per cent of the tasks had been achieved. The accomplishments of the project, the lessons learnt and knowledge gained were "milestones" in India's progress towards technological self-reliance. In the last six months, about 500 commands had been successfully transmitted to Aryabhata from the Sriharikota and Moscow ground stations and a number of experiments carried out had provided "most useful" information on tracking which would be helpful for the earth observation satellite which was to follow Aryabhata. It is expected now that Aryabhata will function in space for about two years although the original expectation was that it would have an active life of about six months. Aryabhata's slower than expected spin decay had shown that the structure of the satellite and its systems were exceptionally clean, magnetically." So far, only one-sixth of the gas on board had been used up for spinning the spacecraft which meant that instead of respinning being carried out once every 25 days, Aryabhata would require to be spun up once every six months. In retrospect, the functioning of Aryabhata and the ground stations had been more than satisfactory, ISRO said here to-day. In spite of the hitch in the power supply system the first few days rof operation had given some useful information from two of the scientific experiments.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO OCTOBER 20, 1925

## The toll of malaria

London, Oct. 19: The direct annual cost of sickness and death attributable to Malaria is between 50 and 60 Million sterling, according to Mr. Balfour, Director of London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, who, in a speech at Guild House, Eccleston Square, pointed out that Malaria was constantly warring against the Empire, picking off the officers attached to the Mercantile marine and crippling Trade. He added the world'a annual death toll from Malaria was 2 millions.

From Page One

## Pakistan, Afghanistan agree on ceasefire

Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have remained strained since 2023.

Islamabad has been repeatedly raising concerns over the use of Afghan soil by militants carrying out cross-border attacks.

The situation further deteriorated following repeated terrorist attacks by TTP, including one in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Orakzai district recently, which claimed the lives of 11 military personnel, including a Lieutenant-Colonel and a Major.

The Foreign Office on Wednesday announced that a temporary ceasefire had been agreed with Afghanistan for the next 48 hours amid the recent border hostilities. Later on Friday, the ceasefire was extended.

However, hours after Islamabad and Kabul extended their two-day ceasefire, Pakistan launched fresh air strikes targeting terrorist hideouts in Afghanistan late on Friday.

Three Afghan cricketers were among several people killed in the strikes, which followed a terror attack at a military installation in North Waziristan, claimed by TTP.

Following the incident, the Afghanistan Cricket Board withdrew from participating in the upcoming Tri-Nation T20I Series involving Pakistan, scheduled to be played in late November.

On Saturday, Army chief Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir warned Afghanistan to choose between "peace and chaos" as it asked Kabul to take firm and immediate action against terrorists using Afghan soil to launch attacks inside Pakistan.

## Mullaperiyar open; rain havoc in Idukki, Theni

Amid the rain on Sunday, Idukki saw its first casualty when Parappallil Thomas alias Thankachan, 66, was killed after his two-wheeler got caught under falling debris on the Kumily-Anavilasom-Kattappana road near Vellaramkunnu.

Idukki's Kumily panchayat was among the worst hit, with neighbourhoods in Onnam Mile, Atta Palam, Kumily town, Periyar Colony, Chelimala, Valiyakandan and Anavachal reporting inundation.

A resident, Jaison Thekkady, told *The Hindu* that the rising floodwater surprised scores of residents, forcing them to move to upper floors or houses of relatives on higher ground.

The rain also disrupted traffic along the Gudalloor-Kozhikode road passing through Manimoola in Kerala's Malappuram district. The heavy spell caused the water levels to rise significantly in the Karakodam, Kalakkad and Athithode Rivers in the district.

Overnight rain caused minimal flooding in Kochi, inconveniencing early morning commuters, including two-wheeler riders.

The government had warned fisherfolk from venturing into sea.

**Man dead in T.N.**

In Tamil Nadu's Virudhunagar district bordering Theni, the body of a farmer, Ramachandran, 49, who was washed away on Friday while crossing a flooded causeway on a two-wheeler along with two of his relatives, was found on Saturday. The two relatives had swum to safety.

Following widespread rain in Western Ghats over the last two days, water flow has been steadily rising in the reservoirs and tanks in the district.

## Israel halts flow of aid, alleges ceasefire breach

Israel's military said militants fired at troops in areas of Rafah city that are Israeli-controlled according to the agreed-upon ceasefire lines. No injuries were reported. The military said Israel responded with air strikes and artillery.

Hamas, which continued to accuse Israel of multiple ceasefire violations, said communication with its remaining units in Rafah had been cut off for months and "we are not responsible for any incidents occurring in those areas".

Shortly before sunset, Israel's military said it had begun a series of air strikes in southern Gaza against what it called Hamas targets. It also said its forces struck "terrorists" approaching troops in Beit Lahiya in the north.

An Israeli air strike on a makeshift coffee house in Zawaida town in central Gaza killed at least six Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, part of the Hamas-run government.

Another strike killed at least two people near the Al-Ahly soccer club in the Nuseirat refugee camp, the Ministry said. The strike hit a tent and wounded eight others, said Al-Awda Hospital, which received the casualties.

The hospital said it also received the bodies of four persons killed in a strike on a school sheltering displaced families in Nuseirat, along with the body of one person killed in a strike at a charging point west of Nuseirat.

Another strike hit a tent in the Muwasi area of Khan Younis in the south, killing at least four persons, including a woman and two children, according to Nasser Hospital.

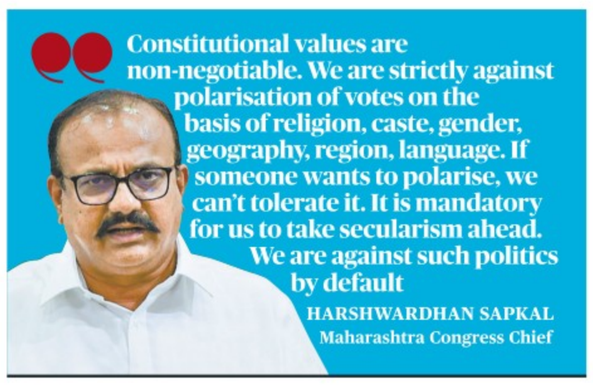
The strike in Beit Lahiya killed two men, according to Shifa Hospital.

An Israeli military official told presspersons there had been three incidents on Sunday, two in southern Gaza and one in the north, and noted that the update was partial for now.

# MVA cannot take call on new alliance partner: Cong. leader

If any new party is to be added to the political equation in Maharashtra, all the INDIA bloc parties will have to sit together and take a decision on it, says State Congress chief Harshwardhan Sapkal

**Vinaya Deshpande Pandit**
MUMBAI




With increasing buzz about a possible political alliance between the Thackeray cousins, the Maharashtra Congress has expressed reluctance to join hands with any party that has a polarisation agenda.

Constitutional values and secularism are non-negotiables for the Congress, the party's State chief Harshwardhan Sapkal told *The Hindu* when asked about the possibility of a partnership with Raj Thackeray's Maharashtra Navnirman Sena. "We are strictly against polarisation... If someone wants to be a part of the alliance, they will have to agree with constitutional values," he said, though he made it clear that there has not yet been any proposal for the MNS to join the alliance.

He emphasised that any decision on partnership with the MNS is not up to the Congress alone, nor is it a call for the Maha Vikas Aghadi, a State-level alliance of the Congress, Nationalist Congress Party (Sharad Pawar), and the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT). "If any new alliance partner is to be added to the political equation in Maharashtra, all the INDIA bloc parties will have to sit together and take a call on it," Mr. Sapkal insisted.

**Growing bonhomie**

Mr. Sapkal's remarks gain significance against the backdrop of the growing proximity between Mr. Uddhav and his cousin Mr. Raj, ahead of local body elections which are soon to be announced in Maharashtra.

Mr. Raj recently shared the stage with all the leaders of the Maha Vikas Aghadi when they met Election Commission officials to complain about alleged irregularities on the electoral rolls. Two days later, the Thackeray cousins came together again for a Deepavali programme inauguration where both their families were seen together. Their growing bonhomie has led to speculation about a possible alliance between their parties for the local body polls.

Asked if the Congress would be open to a new alliance partner if the cousins come together for the elections, Mr. Sapkal said: "It is not just the Congress, but the INDIA bloc partners which will decide at the national level if they want any new partner or not. Maha Vikas Aghadi is not there anymore. We are the INDIA bloc now. And, there is no such discussion so far. There is no such proposal as yet. If the cousins meet, their families are coming together, we don't have any problems with it. Congress has been propagating '*Mohabbat ki dukaan* (shop of love)'. That is their personal relationship. Politically, there is no such proposal."

The Maharashtra Congress chief pointed out that though the Shiv Sena (UBT) and the Congress also held different ideologies, the two parties had come together on the basis of a Common Minimum Programme.

"Our priority is constitutional values. We are against the BJP's core ideology. Someone has to clear their stance, then we can go ahead and talk. If they want to negotiate, they have to agree with the constitutional values," Mr. Sapkal said, laying down the ground rules for any alliance proposal. "Constitutional values are non-negotiable. We are strictly against polarisation of votes on the basis of religion, caste, gender, geography, region, language. If someone wants to polarise, we can't tolerate it. It is mandatory for us to take secularism ahead. We are against such politics by default," he said.

The Congress has also decided to allow its district level leadership to decide on local alliances for the local body polls. "The equations for the local body elections are different. Congress, over seven months ago, had a common consensus in the party. All decisions should not be taken in Mumbai with respect to local body elections. We need to decentralise decision-making. District units should take decisions," Mr. Sapkal said.

# 96 lakh fake voters in Maharashtra poll rolls: Raj Thackeray

**The Hindu Bureau**
MUMBAI

Raj Thackeray

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president Raj Thackeray on Sunday attacked the Election Commission (EC), alleging that nearly 96 lakh fake voters had been added to the State's electoral rolls ahead of the local body elections.

Addressing booth-level party workers at NESCO, Goregaon in Mumbai, Mr. Thackeray demanded a complete clean-up of the voters' list before any polls were held, calling the alleged manipulation a "mockery of democracy".

He claimed that Mumbai alone had 8 lakh to 10 lakh fake voters, with similar numbers in Thane, Pune, and Nashik, and warned that such rigging would be an insult to genuine voters across Maharashtra. "They have done this in every village and city. If elections are held like this, it is an insult to voters in Maharashtra and the country," the MNS chief said.

Mr. Thackeray accused the ruling party of attempting to "fix" the elections by flooding the rolls with bogus entries. "It doesn't matter whether you vote or not. The match is already fixed," he claimed, questioning the legitimacy of the democratic process.

He also responded to critics of the MNS's poor electoral performance, arguing that skewed voter data undermined fair representation. "How will my party have MLAs and MPs if the voting arithmetic itself is compromised?" he asked.

During the speech, Mr. Thackeray played a clip of Narendra Modi from his time as Gujarat Chief Minister, where he had criticised the EC, to highlight what he called hypocrisy now that the BJP was in power.

He alleged that MLAs from the ruling party had privately admitted to voter list tampering and slammed the EC's decision to freeze voter list updates after July 25, which, he said, disenfranchised thousands of young voters.

**Ballot paper voting**

The MNS chief called for a return to ballot paper voting, arguing that it would restore transparency and trust in the electoral process.

## RSS chief calls for freeing minds from 'foreign influence'

**The Hindu Bureau**
MUMBAI

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Sunday called for freeing Indian minds from the "foreign influence" of the Macaulay Knowledge System (MKS) to reconnect with the country's own intellectual traditions. Speaking at the release of Arya Yug Vishay Kosh encyclopedia in Mumbai, Mr. Bhagwat said the colonial-era education model had shaped thinking of Indians in ways that distanced them from their roots.

"We were not educated in the Indian system. We were educated in the Macaulay Knowledge System. Our origins, foundation, and our intellect for the pursuit of knowledge were formed accordingly. They say we were colonised. We are Indians, but our minds and intellects became foreign. We must completely free ourselves from that foreign influence. Only then will we be able to access our knowledge tradition, understand its importance," he said.

Mr. Bhagwat said while India should revive its knowledge systems, it must also learn from global progress. "If the rest of the world has advanced, we should understand the reasons for their progress, adopt what is good, and discard what is useless," he said.

## GRAP Stage 2 curbs kick in as Delhi's air turns 'very poor'

**Press Trust of India**
NEW DELHI

A smog gun sprays water to control pollution levels in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has invoked Stage II of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) across Delhi-NCR as the city's air quality slipped into the "very poor" category, with the AQI crossing the 300 mark.

The move came after the Sub-Committee on GRAP on Saturday reviewed the worsening pollution levels and forecasts by the India Meteorological Department and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, which warned of further deterioration in the coming days.

"The AQI of Delhi has shown an increasing trend since morning and has been recorded as 296 at 4 p.m. and 302 at 7 p.m.," the CAQM said, directing authorities to implement all Stage II measures with immediate effect, in addition to Stage I actions already in force.

The panel also asked all implementing agencies to keep strict vigilance, particularly on dust mitigation and to ensure compliance with targeted timelines laid down under the comprehensive policy to curb air pollution in NCR.

Under Stage II of GRAP, several curbs and intensified actions include daily mechanical or vacuum sweeping and water sprinkling on identified roads, preferably before peak traffic hours, to control dust.

Construction and demolition sites face intensified inspections to ensure strict enforcement of dust control measures.

To promote cleaner mobility, the GRAP Stage II mandates augmentation of public transport services through additional CNG and electric buses and increased frequency of metro services, along with differential fare rates to encourage off-peak travel.

## Muivah must apologise to Nagas, says organisation

**The Hindu Bureau**
GUWAHATI

A Manipur-based Naga organisation has asked Thuingaleng Muivah, general secretary of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN), to apologise to the Naga communities for his past mistakes, during his homecoming on October 22.

The Zeliangrong United Front said Mr. Muivah would visit his native village, Somdal in Ukhrul district, "empty-handed", 55 years after going out on a mission to seek freedom for the Nagas. It insisted there was no reason to glorify an individual who "failed the Nagas on all fronts".

# PM to face Quad, BRICS leaders at ASEAN meet next week

NEWS ANALYSIS

**Suhasini Haidar**
NEW DELHI

India's balancing act between the Quad and BRICS will come to the fore at the upcoming Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit in Kuala Lumpur from October 26 to 28, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to attend the East Asia Summit (EAS) along with U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese Premier Li Qiang.

Leaders or representatives of China, Russia, Japan, India, Australia, and New Zealand are expected at the EAS, while Brazil President Lula da Silva and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa will attend as observers at the ASEAN-related summits. This means Mr. Modi, if he does travel to Kuala Lumpur this week, will have the chance to meet all counterparts from the Quad and key founder members of BRICS as well, as India prepares to host both summits next year.

While the External Affairs Ministry has not so far confirmed Mr. Modi's participation, Malaysian Foreign Minister Mohamad Hasan announced last week that Mr. Modi would attend the ASEAN-related summits, including the EAS, and government officials said Mr. Modi was "likely" to attend.

India was meant to be the host of the Quad Summit this year, but with India-U.S. tensions overshadowing the past few months, officials have indicated the Quad Summit could be held in 2026. India will also take over as chair of the BRICS, and host the summit of the 11-nation grouping of emerging economies in 2026. India is the only common factor between the two groupings often antithetical to each other, as one includes the U.S. and its allies, while the other includes Russia and China. In addition, Mr. Trump's trade tariffs, threats against India for buying Russian oil, sanctions on Iran (a new BRICS member), and threats to slap 100% tariffs on the BRICS members that he accuses of backing a common currency to counter the U.S. dollar, have added to the strain.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with Secretary-General of ASEAN Kao Kim Hourn and other dignitaries during the 21st ASEAN-India Summit in Vientiane in 2024. ANI

"The downward trend in global economic growth, uncertainty in investment flows and interest rates, unilateral measures and supply chain disruptions have come to define the current international economic landscape," Sudhakar Dalela, Secretary (Economic Relations), External Affairs Ministry, told a conference organised by the Chintan Research Foundation in Delhi last week. "India's BRICS chairship comes at a time when the world is navigating through multiple challenges, particularly affecting the Global South countries," he said, describing India's plans to host the summit in the 20th year of BRICS.

Meanwhile, Indian and American officials working on setting up the meeting between Mr. Modi and Mr. Trump on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit, have also been discussing scheduling the Quad summit, but no date has emerged thus far, a number of diplomatic sources said. If the U.S.-India-Australia-Japan summit cannot be held this year, as is looking more likely, it will be the second year in a row that India-U.S. tensions would have derailed New Delhi's plans.

Mr. Modi had invited Quad leaders to a summit in January 2024, timed with Republic Day, but the invitation was declined by then-U.S. President Joe Biden amid a strain over the Pannun case. Mr. Biden subsequently hosted the Quad Summit in September 2024 in the U.S.

At a closed-door session on the Quad in Delhi this week, organised by the Jindal Global University, experts said Mr. Trump's 'America first' doctrine now posed a "test to Quad resilience".

As a result, while Mr. Modi's visit to Kuala Lumpur is planned primarily for ASEAN-related meetings with South East Asian leaders, including the review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA), his schedule may also be crowded with discussions on the way forward on the two important groupings India will host in the upcoming months – the Quad and BRICS.

# BIHAR ASSEMBLY ELECTION

## Giriraj Singh stirs fresh row in Bihar

Union Home Minister Giriraj Singh has once again created controversy by making derogatory remarks against Muslims, saying he does not want the vote of *'namak haram'* (betrayers).

He said this while addressing a rally in Arwal on October 18, in which he slammed the people of the minority community, saying they don't vote for the BJP despite receiving the benefits of the government schemes.

He said that those who do not acknowledge favours are called '*namak haram*.'

RJD leader Mrityunjay Tiwari slammed the Minister for his remarks, alleging that whenever an election comes, the BJP leaders always play Hindu-Muslim card. "People of Bihar are not going to support such leaders who believe in distributing sword," he added.

Giriraj Singh

## Owaisi's AIMIM announces list of 25 candidates

The Asaduddin Owaisi-led AIMIM, which had vowed to contest "100 seats" in the Bihar polls upon being spurned by the INDIA bloc, on Sunday announced 25 candidates, including two non-Muslims. The list, which includes the name of Akhtarul Iman, the State president of AIMIM and its lone MLA in Bihar, was shared by the party on the social media platform X.

Besides, the party has fielded Manoj Kumar Das from Sikandra, a reserved seat in the south-central district of Gaya. In the Dhaka constituency of East Champaran, which borders Nepal, the party has given ticket to Rana Ranjeet Singh.

In the last Assembly polls, the party had contested 19 seats, winning five of those, but four of its MLAs later joined the RJD. PTI

> Once you get down the flyover in Patna, you find they [roads] are in bad shape. The tall claims of development do not mislead people
>
> **DIPANKAR BHATTACHARYA**
> CPI(ML) leader

## Saba Zafar gets JD(U) ticket; Ali withdrawn

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U) on Sunday withdrew the candidature of Sabir Ali from the Amour constituency in favour of Saba Zafar, who had filed nomination papers on the party's ticket. Mr. Ali, however, said, "I do not take it to heart and am ready to campaign for JD(U) wherever I am told". PTI

ANI

> A simple party worker can't think of contesting elections. It is a fact that unbridled use of funds has made the playing field for polls uneven
>
> **MRITYUNJAY TIWARI**
> RJD State unit spokesperson

**Campaign trail:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar in Purnea. FILE PHOTO

## *Modi to launch Bihar election campaign on October 24*

**Amit Bhelari**
PATNA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch his Bihar election campaign in support of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidates on October 24, BJP State president Dilip Jaiswal said on Sunday.

Mr. Modi will hold his first rally in Samastipur district, the birthplace of former Chief Minister of Bihar Karpoori Thakur. He will also visit Karpoorigram, the ancestral home of the Bharat Ratna awardee.

"Prime Minister Modi will launch his campaign from Karpoori village, where he will pay tribute to the great leader of the people and then address his first election rally in Samastipur," Mr. Jaiswal said.

Mr. Jaiswal said Mr. Modi would then address an election rally in Begusarai on the same day.

The Prime Minister will also visit Bihar on October 30 to address rallies in Muzaffarpur and Chapra. He will also address meetings on November 2, 3, 6 and 7, Mr. Jaiswal said, adding further dates of his election rally would be shared later.

Mr. Jaiswal clarified that the Prime Minister will not be visiting the State during Chhath Puja. "The Prime Minister wanted to be here during Chhath Puja, but Chhath devotees may face issues due to his arrival, so due to security reasons, he will not be coming," Mr. Jaiswal said.

He added that Union Home Minister Amit Shah will address around 25 rallies in Bihar and Union Ministers Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari and other top leaders will attend an equal number of meetings.

On October 16, the party released its list of 40 star campaigners, featuring top leaders such as Mr. Modi and BJP chief J.P. Nadda, besides Union Ministers Shah and Singh.

The list also had the names of five BJP Chief Ministers, including Assam's Himanta Biswa Sarma, Delhi's Rekha Gupta and Maharashtra's Devendra Fadnavis, along with Bhojpuri stars Pawan Singh, Manoj Tiwary and Ravi Kishan.

Mr. Shah had started his campaign from Saran on October 17.

**'Resolved to form NDA govt.'**

Meanwhile, Mr. Jaiswal targeted the *Mahagatbandhan*, or grand alliance, over seat-sharing and ticket-distribution issues. Mr. Jaiswal said while "all five Pandavas" of the NDA – a reference to the BJP, the Janata Dal (United), the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), the Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular), and the Rashtriya Lok Morcha (RLM) – have unitedly entered the electoral fray after amicable seat division, the "*Kaurava* Army" (grand alliance) was seeing infighting.

Accompanied by national spokesperson Guru Prakash and State media in-charge Danish Iqbal, he asserted that the people of Bihar were wondering "how they will run the government if this was the situation with seat-sharing".

"The people and voters of Bihar have resolved to form an NDA government again in Bihar. The people are also observing the culture and nature of the grand alliance. They are watching the 'money game' being played out for tickets in the grand alliance closely," Mr. Jaiswal alleged.

The first phase of polling will be held on November 6 and the second phase on 11.

The results will be announced on November 14.

# Fronts without faces: grand alliance, NDA reluctant to name CM candidate

Congress is yet to accept Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav as the chief ministerial face; BJP is not fully forthcoming on having Nitish Kumar continue as the Chief Minister if the NDA wins the election; the Congress and RJD are yet to reach a seat-sharing arrangement for the grand alliance

IN FOCUS

**Amarnath Tewary**
PATNA

Ahead of the first phase of the Bihar Assembly election on November 6, confusion prevails among the two rival blocs in the State over the probable Chief Minister.

In the grand alliance, the Congress is yet to accept Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav as the chief ministerial face. The party leaders say they will discuss the issue after the polls.

"And, this seems to be a real bottleneck for finalisation of seat sharing in the alliance. The RJD considers Congress State president Rajesh Ram the man behind the game plan, and that is why it has fielded Suresh Paswan as the party candidate in the Kutumba constituency in Aurangabad district from where Ram has won twice," said a Congress leader, preferring anonymity and hoping that the confusion created by both parties by fielding candidates against each other in a few constituencies "may be resolved by tomorrow".

RJD spokesperson Mrityunjay Tiwari said, "Our party leader Tejashwi Yadav has been the chairman of the grand alliance coordination committee in the State and the chairman of the committee will, in the usual course, become the Chief Minister. By the blessings of the people of the State, no one but Tejashwi Yadav will be the next CM of Bihar."

Similarly, in the ruling National Democratic Alliance, the BJP is yet to declare that Janata Dal(U) leader Nitish Kumar will continue as Chief Minister if the alliance wins the election. Janata Dal(U) leaders have been saying that Mr. Kumar is the only choice for Chief Minister.

"If not Nitish Kumar, who else will be? He is the Chief Minister of the State and he will be the Chief Minister even after the poll," JD(U) spokesperson Neeraj Kumar said.

**No comments**

But senior BJP leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who recently visited Bihar for three days, stayed away from making any direct comment on Mr. Kumar continuing as the Chief Minister.

"The leaders of alliance partners would elect a CM," he said in a programme on a private news channel. Mr. Shah addressed public meetings in Bihar, but he did not name Mr. Kumar as the chief ministerial candidate.

**Not named:** The RJD says Tejashwi Yadav has been the chairman of the grand alliance coordination committee and hence he should be the chief ministerial candidate. ANI

Some years ago, after Mr. Kumar had snapped ties with the BJP to join hands with the grand alliance, Mr. Shah had asserted that all "doors of the BJP have been shut forever for Nitish Kumar". Both the JD (U) and BJP are contesting an equal number of 101 seats each out of the total 243 in the two-phase Assembly election on November 6 and 11.

The NDA partners, Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), led by Chirag Paswan, the Rashtriya Lok Morcha, led by Upendra Kushwaha, and the Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) of former Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi, too have stayed away from backing Mr. Kumar as the chief ministerial candidate.

Neither does the self-proclaimed third player in the electoral arena, Jan Suraaj Party, founded by former poll strategist Prashant Kishor, appear clear on who will be the chief ministerial face of the party. "It is for the first time in the last several decades, Bihar is going to the polls without any CM face from any political party or the political bloc, throwing the voters in an utter confused state," political analyst N.K. Choudhary said. "Chaos and confusion reign supreme in today's Bihar's political firmament when polls are knocking on the door."

The grand alliance has not even finalised seat-sharing, and voters are confused over who is contesting from which party. In over a dozen constituencies, the Congress and Rashtriya Janata Dal have both fielded candidates.

The NDA has finalised seat sharing among alliance partners, but voters of Chenari in Rohtas district are confused over Murari Prasad Gautam, who had joined the BJP from the Congress but is contesting on the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) ticket. "We're still confused from which party Gautam*ji* is a candidate for, though he has filed his nomination papers on the LJP(RV) ticket," said a voter, Kanhaiya Prasad, 48, over the phone.

Mr. Prasad works as a mason in Gurugram, but he comes to his constituency during every election time. "This time, they've confused us all," he said.

Asked who will be the Chief Minister or whether he thinks Mr. Kumar should continue, he said, "I'm yet to know who are the CM faces of parties. I guess none have announced yet. In this confused state, it is better that Nitish*ji* continue. He has been doing good work. But, if someone else comes up before the polls, we'll definitely give a rethink."

## 'Money for ticket': aspirants make charges against Cong., RJD leaders

**Amit Bhelari**
PATNA

Dissent grew within the Opposition grand alliance on Sunday over the distribution of ticket for the Bihar Assembly election.

Mohammad Afaque Alam, Congress MLA for Kasba, who was denied ticket, levelled a serious allegation against the Bihar Congress in-charge, Krishna Allavaru, Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee president Rajesh Ram, and Congress Legislature Party leader Shakeel Ahmed Khan, saying the senior leadership was extorting money for nominations. Mr. Afaque Alam demanded an investigation by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

"I demand an investigation into the ticket distribution. The party's clean image has been maligned. I want to very clearly state that money has been extorted by Rajesh Ram, Allavaru, and Shakeel Ahamed Khan. There are some other leaders as well who have made the *Mahagatbandhan* [grand Alliance] impure. Rahul Gandhi*ji* must intervene and investigate the ticket distribution," he said in a video message posted on social media.

On Saturday night, the Congress's election committee released the names of five more candidates, fielding Mohammad Irfan Alam in Kasba in place of the three-time MLA.

Madan Shah creating a ruckus over ticket denial outside former Chief Minister Rabri Devi's residence on Sunday. ANI

**Congress leader has demanded a probe by Rahul Gandhi into extortion charge**

An audio clip, purportedly of Mr. Afaque Alam speaking to Mr. Ram on a phone call, went viral on social media. He is heard requesting the State Congress president to intervene and speak to the party's top leaders in Delhi to give him ticket. Mr. Ram is heard expressing his helplessness, saying that he had already given his best and had even signed his document, but some people in the party were engaged in "other ways around". Even his hands were tied, Mr. Ram is further heard saying, adding that the top party leadership was "not listening to him".

Mr. Ram is heard saying that Purnea MP Rajesh Ranjan, alias Pappu Yadav, too was involved in the selection of Mr. Irfan Alam, who is reportedly close to the MP. The Kasba constituency is in Purnea district. On Friday, a video of Mr. Pappu Yadav and Mr. Irfan Alam went viral on social media.

On Saturday, Anand Madhab, spokesperson and chairman of the Congress's State research department, quit the post with immediate effect. Disgruntled party leaders, including an MLA and a former MLA, had accused Mr. Allavaru and Mr. Ram of selling ticket.

Similar situations played out in the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) as well. Madan Prasad, who contested the previous Assembly election from the Madhuban Assembly constituency, was seen crying for ticket. Mr. Prasad tore his *kurta* outside former Chief Minister Rabri Devi's residence, and lay down on the road.

Mr. Prasad alleged that Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav's political adviser and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Yadav had denied him ticket because he had not paid what was demanded.

"He told me to give ₹2.7 crore for ticket, but I refused – Sanjay Yadav has sold the ticket," Mr. Prasad alleged.

Another RJD leader, Ritu Jaiswal, who contested the 2020 Assembly election from Parihar, said she would contest as an Independent candidate. "My conscience does not accept contesting the Assembly election from any constituency other than Parihar. I have clearly informed the party leadership that if the party does not change its decision, I will contest the election from Parihar as an Independent candidate," Ms. Jaiswal posted on social media platform X.

The ticket has been given to Smita Purve, daughter-in-law of former RJD State president Ramchandra Purve.

## EC revives economic intelligence panel ahead of Bihar polls

**Press Trust of India**
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) has reactivated its economic intelligence panel after a gap of six years to curb the use of money, liquor, and drugs to influence voters ahead of the Bihar polls.

The Multi-Departmental Committee on Election Intelligence (MDCEI) met in New Delhi on October 17 for the first time since 2019 to fine-tune the strategy of enforcement agencies and Central police forces to prevent the use of money power and freebies to sway voters in the poll-bound State.

The committee was formed in 2014 ahead of the Lok Sabha election that year.

Officials said the panel had met ahead of elections between 2014 and 2019, but not formally since then. Heads of agencies and security forces had continued to hold discussions on ways to check money power. Friday's meeting was the first large-scale one after the gap.

The committee includes 17 departments and agencies: the Central Board of Direct Taxes, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Enforcement Directorate, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Central Economic Intelligence Bureau, Financial Intelligence Unit-India, Reserve Bank of India, Indian Banks' Association, Narcotics Control Bureau, Railway Protection Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Sashastra Seema Bal, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, Airports Authority of India, and Department of Posts.

MDCEI meeting focused on preparing a road map to tackle the use of poll inducements.

**Panel will act to check use of money power and freebies to sway Bihar voters**

The meeting focused on preparing a comprehensive road map to tackle the use of cash and other inducements in elections.

## INBRIEF

### AI to operate special flight for passengers stranded in Milan

Air India will operate a special flight from Milan to Delhi on Sunday to bring back passengers stranded in the Italian city after the airline had cancelled its flight on Friday following a technical issue with the Dreamliner aircraft. There were posts on social media complaining about the lack of adequate facilities for the passengers. "To ensure that the affected passengers can return home to India in time for the festive occasion, our teams expedited the rectification process on the aircraft at Milan and secured the necessary approvals to operate an additional commercial flight departing Milan at 1900 hours local time and arriving in Delhi on the morning of 20 October," a statement said. PTI

### Deadline for filing GSTR-3B return extended till Oct. 25

The government on Sunday extended the due date for filing the monthly GSTR-3B tax payment form by five days till October 25. The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), in a notification, said the GSTR-3B filers for September and the July-September quarter can pay taxes by October 25. "@cbic_india extends the GSTR-3B filing deadline," the CBIC said in a post on X. GSTR-3B is a monthly and quarterly summary return that registered taxpayers file in a staggered manner between the 20th, 22nd, and 24th of every month for different categories of taxpayers. The extension was on expected lines, with October 20 being the Deepavali festival. PTI

### 146 species recorded in Kaziranga bird survey

The Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve recorded 146 species in the latest bird survey, Assam's wildlife officials said on Sunday. The survey was conducted across five key locations - Agoratoli, Gamiri, Panbari, and Panpur ranges of the national park and the adjoining Laokhowa Wildlife Sanctuary. The surveyors recorded 1,919 avian individuals belonging to 146 species. Agoratoli showed the highest diversity with 89 species, followed by Gamiri and Panbari (59 species each), Panpur (55 species), and Laokhowa (37 species). Kaziranga officials said that several important resident and migratory birds were recorded during the survey.

### Man killed in explosion at firecracker warehouse in U.P.

A man was killed and another injured in an explosion at a firecracker warehouse in Etah in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday, officials said. The blast demolished four nearby shops while the roofs of two adjacent homes collapsed. The deceased's identity is yet to be ascertained, the police said. "Rescue operations are under way. One body has been recovered, and efforts are on to ensure that no one is trapped under the debris," Circle Officer Rajesh Singh said. Sanju Lodhi, 40, who sustained injuries, has been admitted to the district medical college in a serious condition, the officer said. PTI

# Chandrayaan-2 makes first-ever observations on lunar exosphere: ISRO

The CHACE-2 payload aboard the spacecraft's orbiter showed an increase in total pressure of dayside lunar exosphere when impacted by the sun's coronal mass ejection, says space agency

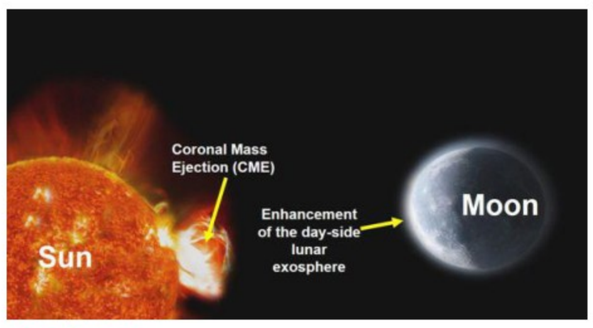
**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

The lunar orbiter of India's second moon mission, Chandrayaan-2, has made the first-ever observation of the effects of the sun's coronal mass ejection (CME) on the moon.

The Chandra's Atmospheric Composition Explorer-2 (CHACE-2) payload onboard the orbiter had made the observation.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said on Saturday that the observations from CHACE-2 showed an increase in the total pressure of the dayside lunar exosphere (very thin atmosphere) when the CME impacted the moon.

"The total number density (number of neutral atoms or molecules present in an environment per unit volume) derived from these observations showed an increase by more than an order of magnitude. This increase is consistent with earlier theoretical models, which predicted such an effect, but CHACE-2 onboard Chandrayaan-2 has observed such an effect for the first time," the ISRO said.




**Direct impact:** An artistic rendition of the Coronal Mass Ejection, or CME, hurled by the sun towards the moon. ISRO.GOV.IN

**Rare occurrence**

The space agency added that the opportunity to directly observe the effects of the CME on the moon came on a rare occurrence, on May 10, 2024, when a series of CMEs were hurled by the sun. "This increased quantity of solar coronal mass that impacted on the moon enhanced the process of knocking off the atoms from the lunar surface, thereby liberating them to the lunar exosphere, which manifested as the enhancement of the total pressure in the sunlit lunar exosphere," it added.

The space agency said that this observation would provide scientific insight into the understanding of the lunar exosphere and space weather effects on the moon.

**Lunar base**

"Apart from pushing the edge of our scientific understanding about the moon and the lunar space weather, this observation also indicates the challenges of building scientific bases on the Moon. Lunar base architects need to account for such extreme events, which would temporarily alter the lunar environment, before the effects subside," it said.

Launched on July 22, 2019 using the GSLV-MkIII-M1 rocket, Chandrayaan-2 carried eight experiment payloads. However, the Vikram lander, while attempting to make a soft landing on the moon's surface, lost communication from the lander and the ground stations.

# Assam pays tribute to deceased singer; Cong. flays BJP govt.

**The Hindu Bureau**
GUWAHATI

Assam Congress president and MP Gaurav Gogoi on Sunday accused the BJP-led State government of shielding two key accused in the unnatural death of singer Zubeen Garg, as people across Assam paid tributes to mark a month since his passing.

According to a preliminary investigation report, Garg died by drowning while swimming off a Singapore island on September 19.

The two accused Mr. Gogoi referred to are Shyamkanu Mahanta, organiser of the North East India Festival in Singapore where Garg was scheduled to perform, and Siddharth Sharma, the singer-composer's manager.

"The probe by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) into Garg's death is not on the right track," Mr. Gogoi said on the sidelines of a public condolence ceremony in Guwahati. The event was organised by several non-NDA parties, including those from the Left Front. He alleged that the State government had constituted the SIT to protect Mr. Mahanta and Mr. Sharma, who are in judicial custody, as they maintain close ties with Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and the BJP. "Everything about the two needs to be made public," he said.

People paying tribute at the newly unveiled statue of Zubeen Garg in Guwahati. ANI

Assam Jatiya Parishad president Lurinjyoti Gogoi echoed the demand for truth, urging all sides not to politicise the case.

At the singer's *samadhi* near Sonapur, on the outskirts of Guwahati, thousands gathered from across Assam to pay their respects.

Many resolved to intensify the demand for justice for Garg and his family.

# Pendency of over 8.82 lakh execution pleas alarming: SC

**Press Trust of India**
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has described as "highly disappointing" and "alarming" the pendency of more than 8.82 lakh execution petitions before various courts across the country.

Execution petitions are pleas filed by decree holders seeking enforcement of court orders passed in civil disputes.

A Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Pankaj Mithal made the observation while reviewing compliance with its March 6 order, which had directed all High Courts to instruct civil courts under their jurisdiction to decide execution petitions within six months. The Bench had also clarified that presiding officers would be held accountable for any delay in following its directive.

"The statistics which we have received are highly disappointing. The figures of the pendency of the execution petitions across the country are alarming. As on date, 8,82,578 execution petitions are pending across the country," the Bench said.

In the last six months since the March 6 order, a total of 3,38,685 execution petitions have been decided and disposed of, the court noted.

The court once again urged all High Courts to evolve a procedure and guide their respective district judiciary for the expeditious disposal of pending execution petitions.

**Karnataka HC data**

The top court, however, noted that "unfortunately, the Karnataka High Court has failed to furnish us with the necessary data in this regard". It directed the Supreme Court registry to issue a reminder to the Karnataka High Court to submit data regarding disposal and pendency of execution petitions over the past six months.

# Ladakh bodies agree to resume talks with Centre on October 22

**Peerzada Ashiq**
SRINAGAR

Ladakh's two key socio-political amalgams, Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), on Sunday decided to resume talks with the Union Home Ministry on October 22 in New Delhi on Statehood and Sixth Schedule.

The LAB and the KDA withdrew from the talks scheduled for October 6, against the backdrop of the deaths of four civilians in firing by security forces and the arrest of activist Sonam Wangchuk on September 24 and 26, respectively.

In a fresh effort, Home Ministry officials on Sunday reached out to the LAB for resumption of talks.

"We welcome the swift initiative of the MHA. Officials conveyed to us about sub-committee talks on October 22 in New Delhi. The LAB and KDA have decided to participate in the talks. We are hopeful of result-oriented talks in a positive environment," said Chering Dorjay Lakruk, Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) president and co-chairman of the LAB.

The LAB and the KDA withdrew from the talks scheduled for October 6 following violence in Leh.

He said the LAB and the KDA would focus on the key demands of Statehood and Sixth Schedule. "We hope the government will discuss the demands with an open heart," Mr. Lakruk said.

The delegation to hold talks with the sub-committee would be headed by LAB Chairman Thupstan Chhewang and the KDA's Qamar Ali Akhoon, Asgar Ali Karbalai and Sajjad Kargili, besides Ladakh MP Haji Haneefa.

**Need for authenticity**

"We are meeting for Statehood, Sixth Schedule, justice for September 24 victims, and release of detainees, including Mr. Sonam Wangchuk. We believe only genuine dialogue can restore trust and fulfil Ladakh's aspirations," Mr. Kargili said.

The talks hit a dead end in September after Mr. Wangchuk organised a three-week hunger strike to press for early resumption of talks over Statehood and Sixth Schedule.

Local people, including supporters of Mr. Wangchuk, took to the streets on September 24 over the delay in announcing talks, resulting in violence, which left four locals dead and around 90 injured.

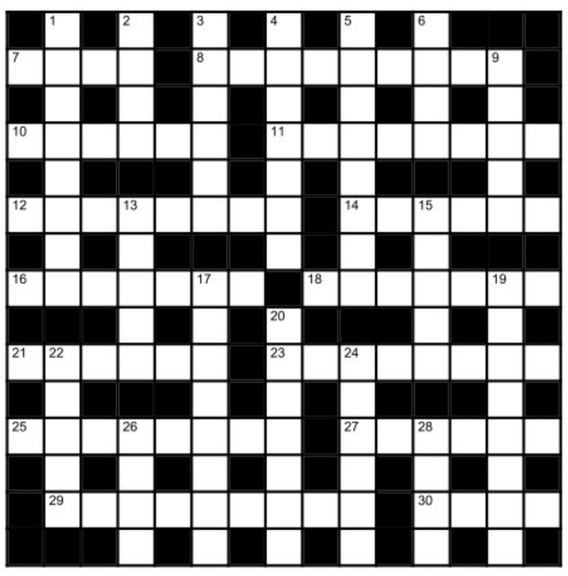
This was followed by imposition of curfew-like restrictions, snapping of Internet and rounding up of supporters of Mr. Wangchuk and the LAB. In the past 10 days, several measures were taken by the Ladakh administration, including release of detained youth, restoring Internet and withdrawing of restrictions, to pave the way for talks. Ladakh was carved out as a Union Territory in 2019 from the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir. Since then, local people have been demanding Sixth Schedule and Statehood.

## TH CROSSWORD + 14618

(set by Incognito)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



**Across**

**7** State: "Love male" (4)
**8** Bury in front of an actress, among other things (5,4)
**10** Kind of hat worn by parents around North America (6)
**11** Moron! Tea is spilt in foyer... (8)
**12** Indian manufactures coke here (8)
**14** Push large implement (6)
**16** Look at Indian food... It's a shame... (7)
**18** Gets away from Spanish headlands (7)
**21** Father gets tenancy charge from immediate ancestor (6)
**23** Asked for some quantity of paper in final part (8)
**25** Pious scamp's boats (8)
**27** Damage brace after international mass (6)
**29** Old PM is happy to gain 14 pounds (9)
**30** Therefore, head office is in London locality (4)

**Down**

**1** Route taken by mice running around showing ability to share feelings (8)
**2** Civilisation from Latin America developed in absence of material (4)
**3** Mediocre journalist captures Juliet around one to forcibly take control of aircraft, for example (6)
**4** Old kind of ship's faultless service carrying sports group (7)
**5** Demonstrations for examinations (8)
**6** Horrible blunder to leave den and obfuscate (4)
**9** A sound quality, to make amends (5)
**13** Called engineer to get distance covered (5)
**15** Look! A pig carrying animal! (5)
**17** Rituals organised around beginning of month show selflessness (8)
**19** Yes! Eight can get vision! (8)
**20** Agitating peons accept current name for post-retirement payment (7)
**22** Silver containing drink is getting old (5)
**24** Shake Archer's store (6)
**26** Erroneous kayo? Fine! (4)
**28** Some tense part of sherpa's travel (4)

## SUDOKU

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| 4 | | | 2 | | 5 | 9 | | 1 |
| 2 | | 5 | | | | 3 | | 7 |
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**Solution to previous puzzle**

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**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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| 8 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| 9 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 8 |
| 4 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 6 |
| 2 | 8 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 4 |
| 5 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| 3 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 7 |

## FAITH

### Let the inner light glow

Deepavali is celebrated with utmost fervour with lamps and fireworks lighting up not only our exterior lives, but also our inner selves, said Damal S Ramakrishnan. It is a festival that celebrates Lord Krishna's victory over Narakasura and is upheld as the best among festivals. The great Bhagavad Gita is considered to be a sibling of the Deepavali festival due to both being the best in their genres and due to their intricate link to Lord Krishna.

Narakasura gained a boon that only his mother, Bhooma Devi, could kill him. Aided by the boon and with a sense of invincibility, he unleashed a reign of terror upon all. When Lord Krishna took him on in open battle, the boon proved to be powerful and Lord Krishna fainted in his chariot. Satyabhama, who was none other than Bhooma Devi, and consort and charioteer of Krishna, took charge and the arrow she fired mortally wounded Narakasura. In his dying moments, Narakasura realised his folly, and prayed that his death be celebrated by all mankind with great joy, happiness and prosperity.

Traditional oil bath ritualistically followed on this day is symbolic as Mahalakshmi is the oil that lights up the lamp of spiritual enlightenment and material prosperity in devotees. Gods are said to reside in water on Deepavali, signifying purity; thus the water symbolises the river Ganga which rose from Brahma's *kamandalam*, flowed over Vishnu's feet and emerged from Siva's locks. Hence the early morning ritual is referred to as Ganga Snan. The best time to light the lamp is early morning when Vishnu, along with Mahalakshmi, resides in all lamps lit by devotees at that hour, in order to bless them.

# Paper gains are 'naughty'

'NOTIPROFIT'

Vaishali R. Venkat

All that glitters is not gold. The adage holds water when it comes to investing. Many investors might feel elated when brokerage platform pops up green arrows and rising numbers. However, the dancing green indicators do not always transform into actual wealth, owing to two kinds of gains that often go hand in hand – realised and unrealised.

A realised gain is earned only when an asset is sold for a price over actual cost and profit is booked. In contrast, an unrealised gain represents a rise in value not yet converted into cash. Financial experts call unrealised gains notional profit; for brevity, we can call it 'notiprofit' (a portmanteau of 'notional' and 'profit'). For example, Ms. Sudha bought 20 shares of Jumbo Ltd. at ₹500 each and sold them for ₹750 each. Here, the sale is executed and profit of ₹5,000 is realised and transferred to her bank account. Realised gains can be reinvested, spent or taxed.

**Only on paper**

Notiprofit is just a rise in the value of an asset you still hold. If Ms. Sudha believes the stock would rise further, she might continue to hold it without selling and this is notiprofit or paper gains, which can't be reinvested or spent. Notiprofit might vanish in the blink of an eye in a highly volatile market. In short, profit is tangible and measurable; whereas notiprofit is intangible and exists only on paper.

Notiprofit can be seen across several segments of the financial ecosystem such as stocks, mutual funds, cryptocurrencies, Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), private equity holdings, employee stock options and even collectibles or art, wherein everyday price movements create mirage-like surpluses in value.

In real estate, notiprofit appears more dramatically. A house purchased decades ago might have doubled or even tripled in market value. But unless it's sold or monetised, the gain remains notional. In reality, for many reasons, the house might not be sold at all, making the profit merely a mirage.

The house owner may feel richer but his wealth is locked in the property and cant be easily converted into cash, real profit.

Factors such as liquidity, transaction costs and market cycles further influence when or whether notiprofit ever becomes real profit. Liquidity refers to how quickly an asset can be converted into cash. Highly-liquid assets such as stocks or mutual funds can be easily sold, allowing notiprofit to be realised quickly. Low liquidity (or illiquid) assets such as real estate, AIFs or private equity are harder to sell and so paper gains remain stuck longer, sometimes indefinitely.

Transaction costs such as stamp duty, registration fees, brokerage, taxes, reduce the eventual conversion of notiprofit into profit. Market cycles also play a vital role: waiting too long in the hope prices will rise further can devour notiprofit if market turns bearish whereas in a bull market, prudent action can transform notiprofit into real profit quickly.

It must be noted that the tax implications depend on whether a gain is realised or unrealised. In almost all cases, notiprofit is not taxed because no transaction has occurred.

**Potential wealth rise**

Notiprofit signals potential but not real wealth. From a behavioural perspective, a few investors might not book profit on time and stay content with just notiprofit, believing the gains will continue to grow. Their satisfaction is mostly tied to unrealised gains. Such patterns of decision-making highlight the mindset of what can be conveniently called 'notivestors.' Understanding the difference between profit and notiprofit helps investors judge their true financial position and avoid the pitfalls of overreacting to paper gains as 'notivestors' often do.

*(The writer is an NISM & CRISIL-certified Wealth Manager and certified in NISM's Research Analyst module)*

**Send queries** on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

ILLUSTRATION: SAINATH B.

# Attractiveness of Small Savings interest rates

Rates are higher than required according to the formula; over the past four to five months, G-Sec yields inched up as the market is looking at end of the current RBI rate cut cycle

UNDER THE LENS

Joydeep Sen

Small Savings Schemes, also known as Post Office Savings Schemes, are useful for channelising savings. Interest rates are set by the government quarterly. For the current quarter, the rates remain unchanged. This means it is beneficial to investors. Here's how.

> There is a 'generosity component' or 'Z' in the currently prevailing Small Savings rates. It is likely these rates would be maintained going forward

**Basis for fixing rates**

The interest rate on Small Savings Schemes will be aligned with Government Security (G-Sec) rates of similar maturity with a spread i.e. mark-up. For example, the spread on Senior Citizens Savings Scheme will be 1% over comparable maturity G-Secs. The rationale for linking it to G-Sec yields in the secondary market is it is in line with interest rate movements in the economy and the market.

Let us say benchmark G-Sec rate is X% and the mark-up as per the formula is Y%. Then the rate must be X% plus Y%. However, if the rate is higher, say X% plus Y% plus Z%, then Z represents the generosity of the Government for citizens' benefit. The rates are reviewed every quarter, but not revised downward every quarter even when G-Sec rates are sliding.

**Current rates**

• Post Office Savings Deposit rate is at 4%.

• Public Provident Fund (PPF) is supposed to have a mark-up spread of 25 basis points (100 bps = 1%). The relevant G-Sec rate, which is the average of G-Sec of corresponding maturity from June-August 2025, relevant for the October- December 2025 quarter, was 6.58%. By this logic, the PPF rate should have been (6.58 + 0.25=) 6.83% but it is 7.1%. Hence 27 bps (0.27%) is 'Z' component.

• Post Office Term deposits of 1, 2 and 3-year maturity are to be at the corresponding G-Sec rate, without any mark-up spread. For 5-year term deposits, the mark-up spread is 25 bps. The maintained rates are much higher. The 'higher' yield or the 'Z, is as much as 1.44% in 1 year term deposits. The rate offered is 6.9% for 1 year.

• Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) is at zero spread; with reference point at 6.58% and rate at 7.5%, the additional interest over formula is 0.92%.

• For NSC VIII Issue, which is at a mark-up of 25 bps, the formula rate is 6.51%. At 7.7%, the additional interest is 1.19%.

• Senior Citizen Savings Scheme (SCSS) has the highest mark-up spread of 1% over reference G-Sec yield, as social benevolence for seniors, who may not have active income. At the reference G-Sec yield of 6.12%, the formula rate is 7.12%. The rate on offer is 8.2% or an additional interest (Z) of 1.08%.

> Compare rates with a high-grade bank as it should be a like-to-like comparison. Only aspect to be taken care of is liquidity in the particular Small Savings Scheme

• Sukanya Samriddhi Account Scheme, which has the longest tenure of 21 years. The formula mark-up is 75 bps. The reference G-Sec yield is 6.58%. Against the formula rate of 7.33%, the rate is 8.2%. The additional interest the girl child would get this quarter is 0.87%.

**Liquidity**

For any investment, you must consider its liquidity. For Small Savings (Post Office) Schemes, rates are attractive and credit quality top grade as it is run by the government. The only other variable is liquidity. You can refer to the website <https://www.indiapost.gov.in/banking-services/saving> for details.

As an example, National Savings Certificate VIII Issue cannot be closed prematurely before the 5- year term except under extreme circumstances. Same is the case for Kisan Vikas Patra. Time deposits can be closed prematurely at lower rates.

**Market movement**

The Reserve Bank of India has reduced the reference repo rate. Earlier it was 6.5% now it is 5.5%. There is a possibility, though on the lower side, of one more rate cut of 25 bps (0.25%). This expectation is driven by low inflation. Usually, G-Sec yields in the secondary market move in consonance with RBI's interest rate steps. However, over the past four to five months, G-Sec yields inched up as the market is looking at the end of the current RBI rate cut cycle.

The implication is, the reference G-Sec yield levels mentioned earlier would be same or little higher for the next quarter. Hence the probability of Small Savings interest rates dipping going forward is low.

**Conclusion**

There is a 'generosity component' or 'Z' in the currently prevailing Small Savings rates. It is likely these rates would be maintained going forward. From the safety aspect, arguably, it is even safer than bank deposits as Small Savings Schemes are run by the government. You may compare the rates you get from the bank. You should compare the rates with a high-grade bank as it should be a like-to-like comparison. Only aspect to be taken care of is liquidity in the particular Small Savings Scheme you are looking at.

*(Joydeep Sen is a corporate trainer (financial markets) and author)*

## Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

| Bank Name | Interest Rates (%) Highest Slab | 1-year Tenure | 3-year Tenure | 5-year Tenure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Small Finance Banks** | | | | |
| AU Small Finance Bank | 7.10 | 6.35 | 7.10 | 6.75 |
| Equitas Small Finance Bank | 7.40 | 7.00 | 7.00 | 7.00 |
| ESAF Small Finance Bank | 7.60 | 4.75 | 6.00 | 5.75 |
| Jana Small Finance Bank | 8.00 | 7.25 | 7.50 | 8.00 |
| Shivalik Small Finance Bank | 7.30 | 6.00 | 7.00 | 6.50 |
| slice Small Finance Bank | 7.75 | 6.25 | 7.50 | 7.00 |
| Suryoday Small Finance Bank | 8.05 | 7.40 | 7.25 | 8.05 |
| Ujjivan Small Finance Bank | 7.45 | 7.25 | 7.20 | 7.20 |
| Utkarsh Small Finance Bank | 7.65 | 6.00 | 7.65 | 7.25 |
| **Private Sector Banks** | | | | |
| Axis Bank | 6.60 | 6.25 | 6.60 | 6.60 |
| Bandhan Bank | 7.20 | 7.00 | 7.00 | 5.85 |
| City Union Bank | 6.75 | 6.75 | 6.65 | 6.25 |
| CSB Bank | 7.00 | 5.00 | 5.75 | 5.75 |
| DBS Bank | 6.55 | 6.30 | 6.40 | 6.25 |
| DCB Bank | 7.20 | 6.90 | 7.00 | 7.00 |
| Federal Bank | 6.70 | 6.40 | 6.50 | 6.50 |
| HDFC Bank | 6.60 | 6.25 | 6.45 | 6.40 |
| ICICI Bank | 6.60 | 6.25 | 6.60 | 6.60 |
| IDFC FIRST Bank | 7.00 | 6.30 | 6.75 | 6.60 |
| IndusInd Bank | 7.00 | 6.75 | 6.90 | 6.65 |
| Jammu & Kashmir Bank | 7.10 | 6.60 | 6.75 | 6.50 |
| Karur Vysya Bank | 6.80 | 6.55 | 6.55 | 6.55 |
| Karnataka Bank | 6.65 | 6.50 | 6.15 | 6.15 |
| Kotak Mahindra Bank | 6.60 | 6.25 | 6.40 | 6.25 |
| RBL Bank | 7.20 | 7.00 | 7.20 | 6.70 |
| SBM Bank India | 7.10 | 7.00 | 7.10 | 7.00 |
| South Indian Bank | 6.60 | 6.60 | 6.20 | 5.70 |
| Tamilnad Mercantile Bank | 6.90 | 6.80 | 6.60 | 6.60 |
| YES Bank | 7.00 | 6.65 | 7.00 | 6.75 |
| **Public Sector Banks** | | | | |
| Bank of Baroda | 6.60 | 6.50 | 6.50 | 6.40 |
| Bank of India | 6.60 | 6.25 | 6.25 | 6.00 |
| Bank of Maharashtra | 6.70 | 6.20 | 6.20 | 6.10 |
| Canara Bank | 6.50 | 6.25 | 6.25 | 6.25 |
| Central Bank of India | 6.75 | 6.40 | 6.25 | 6.25 |
| Indian Bank | 6.70 | 6.10 | 6.25 | 6.00 |
| Indian Overseas Bank | 6.70 | 6.60 | 6.20 | 6.20 |
| Punjab National Bank | 6.60 | 6.25 | 6.40 | 6.25 |
| Punjab & Sind Bank | 6.60 | 6.00 | 6.00 | 6.10 |
| State Bank of India | 6.60 | 6.25 | 6.30 | 6.05 |
| Union Bank of India | 6.60 | 6.40 | 6.60 | 6.40 |

## Home Loan Interest Rates

| Name of Lender | Loan Amount (Rs.) Upto 30 lakh | Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh | Above 75 lakh |
|---|---|---|---|
| | (In %) | | |
| **Public Sector Banks** | | | |
| State Bank of India | 7.50-8.95 | 7.50-8.95 | 7.50-8.95 |
| Bank of Baroda | 7.45-9.25 | 7.45-9.25 | 7.45-9.50 |
| Union Bank of India* | 7.35-10.00 | 7.35-10.00 | 7.35-10.00 |
| Punjab National Bank | 7.50-9.35 | 7.45-9.25 | 7.45-9.25 |
| Bank of India | 7.35-10.10 | 7.35-10.10 | 7.35-10.35 |
| Bank of Maharashtra | 7.35-10.15 | 7.35-10.15 | 7.35-10.15 |
| Punjab and Sind Bank | 7.55-10.75 | 7.55-10.75 | 7.55-10.75 |
| Indian Overseas Bank | 7.35 # | 7.35 # | 7.35 # |
| Indian Bank | 7.40-9.40 | 7.40-9.40 | 7.40-9.40 |
| Central Bank of India | 7.35-9.40 | 7.35-9.40 | 7.35-9.40 |
| **Private Sector Banks** | | | |
| Kotak Mahindra Bank | 7.99 # | 7.99 # | 7.99 # |
| ICICI Bank | 7.70 # | 7.70 # | 7.70 # |
| Axis Bank | 8.35-11.90 | 8.35-11.90 | 8.35-9.35 |
| HSBC Bank | 7.70 # | 7.70 # | 7.70 # |
| South Indian Bank | 7.75 # | 7.75 # | 7.75 # |
| Karur Vysya Bank | 8.50-10.90 | 8.50-10.90 | 8.50-10.90 |
| Karnataka Bank | 8.21-10.76 | 8.21-10.76 | 8.21-10.76 |
| Federal Bank | 8.75 # | 8.75 # | 8.75 # |
| Tamilnad Mercantile Bank | 8.15-9.50 | 8.15-9.50 | 8.15-9.50 |
| Bandhan Bank | 8.41-15.00 | 8.41-12.58 | 8.41-12.58 |
| RBL Bank | 8.20 # | 8.20 # | 8.20 # |
| CSB Bank | 8.30 # | 8.30 # | 8.30 # |
| HDFC Bank | 7.90 # | 7.90 # | 7.90 # |
| City Union Bank | 8.25-9.50 | 8.50-10.00 | 8.75-10.50 |
| **Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)** | | | |
| LIC Housing Finance | 7.50 # | 7.50 # | 7.50 # |
| Bajaj Housing Finance | 7.45 # | 7.45 # | 7.45 # |
| Tata Capital | 7.75 # | 7.75 # | 7.75 # |
| PNB Housing Finance | 8.25-11.50 | 8.25-11.50 | 8.25-10.85 |
| GIC Housing Finance | 8.20 # | 8.20 # | 8.20 # |
| SMFG India Home Finance | 10.00 # | 10.00 # | 10.00 # |
| Sammaan Capital | 8.75 # | 8.75 # | 8.75 # |
| Aditya Birla Capital | 8.25 # | 8.25 # | 8.25 # |
| ICICI Home Finance | 7.50 # | 7.50 # | 7.50 # |

*Extra interest rate concession of 0.05% to borrowers opting for insurance policy.
#Onwards Rates as on Oct. 15 Source:Paisabazaar.com

# The UPI of insurance?

COVERNOTE

K. Nitya Kalyani

Expectations have grown around Bima Sugam, the unified insurance digital marketplace inaugurated mid-September this year as the platform promised to simplify how Indians buy, service and manage insurance policies.

With India's insurance penetration at about 4% of GDP, Bima Sugam carries the potential to widen access, boost transparency and build trust. The website shows the portal is live but not yet open for business. Banners on the home page say marketplace is 'coming soon.'

When fully functional, Bima Sugam aims to be a one-stop destination for all insurance needs – from product discovery and quote generation to purchase, renewal, claims and grievance tracking. It is designed to integrate product information across insurers and categories, allowing customers to make informed choices.

Private aggregator websites offer similar services but the difference is in what Bima Sugam represents – a regulator-backed, industry-supported digital public platform aimed at bringing credibility, interoperability and standardisation. It aligns with the national mission of 'Insurance for All by 2047' of the Centre and the IRDAI (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India).

If executed well, Bima Sugam could do for insurance what UPI did for digital payments and ONDC aims to do for e-commerce. Its structure as a not-for-profit entity jointly promoted by insurers and intermediaries signals a blend of regulatory oversight and industry participation – an encouraging governance model for digital public infrastructure.

We can revisit a few expectations we outlined in CoverNote in 2022 when the idea was announced.

**Universal participation:** Every insurer should be present and list all products. This will expand choice while highlighting and addressing a persistent issue – too much choice.

The proliferation of policy variants shows innovation of the industry. But too much choice can overwhelm and confuse. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) faced a similar challenge with mutual funds and resolved it via standardisation. IRDAI's introduction of standardised policies in key segments was a step in this direction; Bima Sugam can advance it by ensuring comparability of features.

**Comparability and clarity:** Insurance benefits often sound similar but vary widely in meaning. A transparent comparison framework can help customers choose wisely. Simplifying insurance language – coverage, exclusions, co-pay, top-up – would also make the process more accessible and lead to standardising underlying benefits of standard terms.

**Renewals and mobility**: Auto-renewal and secure auto-debit options can prevent unintentional policy lapses and benefit clients and insurers. Importantly, a dedicated mobile app is essential for the smartphone generation that prefers to transact entirely online. If Bima Sugam ensures clarity, comparability and confidence, it can redefine how India engages with insurance.

*(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance and corporate history)*

WASHINGTON

## Hegseth announces yet another U.S. strike on drug-running boat

AFP

The U.S. has conducted another strike on an alleged drug-running boat in international waters, killing three "narco-terrorists," U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth announced on Sunday. Ms. Hegseth said the strike, was carried out on Friday and targeted a vessel affiliated with Colombia's ELN guerrilla group. AFP

LA PAZ

## Bolivia holds run-off as voters seek a President to lift them from crisis

AFP

Bolivians voted in an unprecedented presidential run-off between two conservative, capitalist candidates, after 20 years of rule by the Movement Toward Socialism party. Voters are choosing between former right-wing President Jorge "Tuto" Quiroga and centrist Sen. Rodrigo Paz during their worst economic crisis in decades. AP

WASHINGTON

## Sam Rivers, founding bassist of U.S. metal band Limp Bizkit, dies

AP

The founding bassist of American nu metal band Limp Bizkit, Sam Rivers, has died, the band announced on Saturday. He was 48. "Today we lost our brother. Our bandmate. Our heartbeat," read a statement attributed to band members Fred Durst, Wes Borland, John Otto and DJ Lethal. The cause of death was not given. AFP

DUBAI

## Iran executes person accused of spying for Israel's Mossad agency

AFP

Iran executed a person convicted of spying for Israel's intelligence agency Mossad in the city of Qom, the official judiciary news agency reported on Sunday. The sentence was carried out early on Saturday after the Supreme Court upheld the ruling and a request for a pardon was denied, the Mizan news agency said. AFP

# Following his U.S. trip, Zelenskyy urges allies against appeasing Russia

Ukraine President's Washington visit proves unfruitful as he fails to secure long-range Tomahawk missiles; quoting his previous conversation with Russian President Putin, Trump asks Volodymyr Zelenskyy to 'stop the killing and make a deal'

**Agence France-Presse**
KYIV

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sunday urged allies against appeasing Russia, in a statement after he returned from a trip to the U.S. where he failed to secure long-range Tomahawk missile supplies.

Mr. Zelenskyy came to Washington after weeks of calls for Tomahawks, hoping to capitalise on U.S. President Donald Trump's growing frustration with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin after a summit in Alaska failed to produce a breakthrough. But the Ukrainian leader left empty-handed as Mr. Trump eyes a fresh diplomatic breakthrough on the back of last week's Gaza peace deal.

**Cleaning up:** A resident removes broken glass at an apartment damaged by a Russian strike in Dnipropetrovsk on Sunday. REUTERS

"Ukraine will never grant terrorists any bounty for their crimes, and we count on our partners to uphold this very position," Mr. Zelenskyy wrote on social media on his return from Washington.

He called "for decisive steps" from European and American allies, adding that it was time for another meeting between the European-led "coalition of the willing".

Mr. Trump has appeared far more upbeat about the prospects of a deal since a lengthy call on Thursday with Mr. Putin, in which they agreed to meet soon in Budapest.

After meeting with Mr. Zelenskyy at the White House, Mr. Trump said on the talks were "very interesting, and cordial, but I told him, as I likewise strongly suggested to President Putin, that it is time to stop the killing, and make a DEAL!"

Meanwhile, Moscow has stepped up attacks on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure in recent weeks, leaving thousands without heating and light as the cold winter draws nearer.

Most recently on Sunday, two persons were killed and more than a dozen wounded across Ukraine's east, Kyiv said. In return, Ukraine intensified its strikes on Russian western border regions, as well as its oil and gas facilities.

# Thieves steal French crown jewels from Louvre museum

**Agence France-Presse**
PARIS

Thieves wielding power tools broke into the Louvre on Sunday, taking some of France's priceless crown jewels in a brazen seven-minute heist carried out in broad daylight, officials and sources said.

Authorities recovered a 19th-century gem-encrusted crown – damaged – near the museum, but the culprits were still at large and the target of a manhunt.

The spectacular theft, one of several to target French museums recently, forced the closure for the rest of the day of the Louvre, the world's most-visited museum and home to the Mona Lisa.

Armed soldiers patrolled around the famed glass pyramid entrance, while police teams were seen going inside.

**Out of the blue:** French police officers stand in front of the Louvre Museum after the theft in Paris on Sunday. AFP

The thieves used a powered, extendable ladder of the sort used to hoist furniture into buildings to get into the targeted gallery which houses the crown jewels, sources and officials said.

The crown of Empress Eugenie, the wife of Napoleon III, was found broken near the museum afterwards, a source said. The crown, featuring golden eagles, is covered in 1,354 diamonds and 56 emeralds, according to the museum's website.

# North Korean soldier held by Seoul after crossing land border

**Agence France-Presse**
SEOUL

A North Korean soldier was taken into custody by the South after he voluntarily crossed the heavily fortified land border separating the two Koreas on Sunday, Seoul said.

The soldier was seeking to "to defect to the South", a Defence Ministry said.

Defections across the land border that divides the peninsula are relatively rare, as the area is densely forested, ridden with landmines and monitored by soldiers on both sides.

"Our military secured the custody of one North Korean soldier who crossed the military demarcation line (MDL) in the central front on Sunday," South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said.

**Defections across the border dividing the peninsula are rare, as the area is forested, ridden with mines**

The incident came months after a North Korean civilian made it across the land border with help from the South's military in a 20-hour operation.

# Trump calls Colombia's Petro an 'illegal drug dealer', announces end to U.S. aid

**Associated Press**
PALM BEACH

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Sunday he would slash U.S. funding to Colombia because the country's leader "does nothing to stop" drug production, in what is the latest sign of friction between Washington and one of its closest allies in Latin America.

In a social media post, Mr. Trump referred to Colombian President Gustavo Petro as "an illegal drug dealer" who is "low rated and very unpopular." He warned that Mr. Petro "better close up" drug operations "or the United States will close them up for him, and it won't be done nicely."

Gustavo Petro, left, has accused the U.S.of assassination and sought answers after the latest American strike in Caribbean waters. AFP

Mr. Trump, while at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, wrote on his Truth Social platform that Mr. Petro is "strongly encouraging the massive production of drugs, in big and small fields" across Colombia, which the Republican President spelled as Columbia. "Petro does nothing to stop it, despite large scale payments and subsidies from the USA that are nothing more than a long term rip off of America," Mr. Trump said.

"AS OF TODAY, THESE PAYMENTS, OR ANY OTHER FORM OF PAYMENT, OR SUBSIDIES, WILL NO LONGER BE MADE TO COLUMBIA," Mr. Trump said. He also said Mr. Petro had "a fresh mouth toward America."

Earlier on Sunday, Mr. Petro accused the U.S. government of assassination and demanded answers after the latest American strike in Caribbean waters.

# New Opposition leader of Taiwan gets a message from Xi

**Reuters**
BEIJING/TAIPEI

Chinese President Xi Jinping called on Sunday for efforts to advance "reunification" in a message of congratulations to the new leader of Taiwan's main opposition party, whose election took place amid accusations of interference by Beijing. Cheng Li-wun, who will take over as leader of the Kuomintang (KMT) party on November 1, won Saturday's election at a time of rising tension with Beijing.

Ms. Cheng, in her message to Xi, did not make any mention of union with Beijing, but said both sides of the Taiwan Strait were "members of the Chinese nation", using an expression in Chinese that refers to ethnicity rather than nationality.

Cheng Li-wun

# Sport

## Panwar leads India's glittering show

ROWING

**Press Trust of India**
NEW DELHI

Balraj Panwar spearheaded India's impressive show at the 2025 Asian rowing championships in Hai Phong (Vietnam) as it won 10 medals, including three gold and five silver.

Paris Olympian Panwar won gold in men's single scull while the other yellow metals came through the lightweight men's double scull pair (Lakshay and Ajay Tyagi) and men's quadruple scull (Kulwinder Singh, Navdeep Singh, Satnam Singh and Jakar Khan).

Gurbani Kaur and Diljot Kaur ended a 15-year medal drought for the Indian women at the championships, finishing second in lightweight women's pair. India also won silver in men's eight (Nitin Deol, Parvinder Singh, Lakhveer Singh, Ravi, Gurpratap Singh, Bheem Singh, Jaswinder Singh, Kulbir and Kiran Singh Maiom).

In men's double scull, Jaspinder Singh and Salman Khan won silver; so did the lightweight men's quadruple scull quartet (Rohit, Ujjwal Kumar Singh, Lakshay and Ajay Tyagi) and lightweight men's four (Sannee Kumar, Iqbal Singh, Babu Lal Yadav and Yogesh Kumar).

**Bronze medals:** Nitin Deol and Parvinder Singh (lightweight men's pair); Gurbani Kaur, Diljot Kaur, Suman Devi, Alenna Anto, Kiran, Poonam and Haobijam Tendenthoi Devi (women's eight).

## Hugh Capet favoured for the Sandown Park Plate

HYDERABAD: The six-year-old gelding Hugh Capet, who finished a close second in his last start, should redeem himself in the Sandown Park Plate, the chief event of Monday's (Oct. 20) races.

**1 NIJINSKY PLATE (DIV. II)** (1,200m) Maiden, 3-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 1.50 p.m.: 1. Sharanga (1) Ashad Asbar 60, 2. Mahwish (2) Sonu K 58.5, 3. Cypress (7) Kuldeep Sr. 57, 4. N R I Range (5) H.M. Akshay 57, 5. American Gangster (4) G. Naresh 56.5, 6. Sugriva (3) B. Nikhil 56.5, 7. The Divinely (9) Rafique Sk. 56.5, 8. Grief (10) P. Sai K 55, 9. Kitsune (8) Gaurav 55, 10. Blue Candy (11) Md. Ekram 54.5 and 11. Noorian (6) Akshay K 54.5.

**1. SHARANGA, 2. NOORIAN, 3. N R I RANGE**

**2 SIRCILLA PLATE** (1,400m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.25: 1. Sargent (9) H.M. Akshay 60, 2. Elegant Lady (12) Ashad Asbar 56.5, 3. Silver Lining (7) Md. Ismail 55, 4. Arizona Sun (4) Akshay K 54.5, 5. Real Thalaivaa (11) B. Nikhil 54.5, 6. Anemoi (1) Surya Prakash 53, 7. See My Attitude (6) Afroz K 52.5, 8. Golden Aura (8) Abhay Singh 52, 9. Special Star (5) P. Sai K 51, 10. Bright Knight (3) Md. Ekram 50.5, 11. French Lady (10) Ajay K 50.5 and 12. Politics (2) G. Naresh 50.5.

**1. ARIZONA SUN, 2. ELEGANT LADY, 3. SARGENT**

**3 SANDOWN PARK PLATE** (1,400m) (Terms), 3-y-o and upward (Cat. II), 3.00: 1. D Minchu (6) P. Ajeeth K 60.5, 2. Hugh Capet (1) Akshay K 60, 3. Maverick (2) Kuldeep Sr. 60, 4. Pontefract (3) Md. Ismail 58.5, 5. Reigning Beauty (5) Afroz K 58.5, 6. Decoy (9) Mukesh K 58, 7. N R I Sport (4) H.M. Akshay 58, 8. Pacific Heights (7) Md. Ekram 56 and 9. Brooklyn Beauty (8) Gaurav 53.5.

**1. HUGH CAPET, 2. D MINCHU, 3. DECOY**

**4 MIR MUSHTAQ ALI KHAN MEMORIAL CUP** (1,200m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 3.35: 1. Clara (2) Akshay K 60, 2. High Reward (6) Abhay Singh 59, 3. Rival (8) Ajay K 59, 4. N R I High Power (9) Mukesh K 57.5, 5. Zuza (3) Afroz K 55.5, 6. Only The Brave (1) Md. Ismail 54, 7. Tiger Ruby (4) Rafique Sk. 54, 8. Emerald Touch (5) Ashad Asbar 53.5 and 9. Suryavanshi (7) Surya Prakash 53.

**1. N R I HIGHPOWER, 2. EMERALD TOUCH, 3. CLARA**

**5 S.S. CARDMASTER MEMORIAL CUP** (1,400m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 4.10: 1. Alcahol Free (1) Rafique Sk. 60, 2. Juramento (4) Surya Prakash 59.5, 3. Classy Dame (7) Abhay Singh 59, 4. Hoping Star (5) P. Sai K 58.5, 5. Quality Warrior (6) Md. Ismail 57.5, 6. Trust Me (8) P. Ajeeth K 57.5, 7. Golden Inzio (9) Kuldeep Sr. 54.5, 8. Sucker Punch (2) A.A. Vikrant 54.5, 9. Fortune Art (3) Mukesh K 52.5 and 10. Flashing Memories (10) Nakhat 51.

**1. FORTUNE ART, 2. ALCAHOL FREE, 3. TRUST ME**

**6 NIJINSKY PLATE (DIV. I)** (1,200m) Maiden, 3-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 4.45: 1. Foxy Girl (7) Sonu K 60, 2. Eminency (1) Nakhat 58, 3. Dream To Fly (11) G. Naresh 57, 4. Beech Wood (3) B. Nikhil 56, 5. Ek (4) Afroz K 56, 6. Fox Worth (6) Kuldeep Sr. 56, 7. Star Councillor (8) Ajay K 56, 8. Equine Power (9) P. Sai K 55, 9. Marissa (2) Surya Prakash 54.5, 10. Red Hot Punch (10) P. Ajeeth K 54.5 and 11. Golden Bourbon (5) Kuldeep Jr. 54.

**1. FOXY GIRL, 2. EK, 3. EMINENCY**

Day's Best: **HUGH CAPET**

Jackpot: 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6.

Mini Jackpot: 3, 4, 5 & 6.

Treble: (i) 1, 2 & 3, (ii) 4, 5 & 6.

Tanala: All races.

## Ashoka wins the feature event

HYDERABAD: Trainer D. Netto's ward Ashoka, ridden by Mukesh Kumar, won the Bold Venture Plate (Div. I), the main event of Sunday's (Oct. 19) races.

The winner is owned by M/s. Prabhakar Chowdary Tripuraneni, Rama Seshu Eyunni, Donald Anthony Netto & Tripuranenivenkata Aditya Chowdary.

**1. VENUS DE MILO PLATE (1,400M): UNA PALOMA BLANCA** (Surya Prakash) 1, Bold Indian (Mukesh K) 2, Tupac (B. Nikhil) 3 and Muaser (P. Ajeeth K) 4. 11, 2-3/4 and 1-1/4. 1m, 27.41s. ₹19 (w), 16, 15 and 13 (p). SHP: 24, THP: 35, FP: 65, Q: 34, Tanala: 249. Favourite: Una Paloma Blanca. Owner: Mrs. Rohini Thuppal. Trainer: M.F. Ali Khan.

**2. BOLD VENTURE PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200M): ESPIONAGE** (Kuldeep Singh Sr.) 1, One N Only (Mukesh K) 2, Vivaldo (Ashad Asbar) 3 and Diablo (P. Sai K) 4. Not run: Dali's Destiny. 1-1/2, 5-1/4 and Short Head. 1m, 10.70s. ₹55 (w), 15, 14 and 15 (p). SHP: 30, THP: 47, FP: 240, Q: 87, Tanala: 605. Favourite: Diablo. Owners: M/s. Prakash Babu, P. Ranga Raju, Donald Anthony Netto & Tripuranenivenkata Aditya Chowdary. Trainer: D. Netto.

**3. RANI RUDRAMA DEVI CUP (1,600M): KRYSTALLOS** (P. Ajeeth Kumar) 1, Bholi Punjaban (Mukesh K) 2, Lifes Journey (G. Naresh) 3 and N R I Ultrapower (Akshay K) 4. 1, Neck and 6-1/2. 1m, 40.17s. ₹48 (w), 10, 22 and 11 (p). SHP: 48, THP: 40, FP: 273, Q: 133, Tanala: 723. Favourite: N R I Ultrapower. Owners: Mr. C. Aryama Sundaram & M/s. Mukteshwar Racing LLP. Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

**4. HARD HELD PLATE (1,600M): TERM DEPOSIT** (P. Ajeeth Kumar) 1, Lake Michigan (P. Sai K) 2, Bestie (Akshay K) 3 and Take A Breath (Sonu K) 4. 6-1/2, 2 and 3/4. 1m, 39.65s. ₹20 (w), 14, 11 and 15 (p). SHP: 29, THP: 44, FP: 45, Q: 26, Tanala: 104. Favourite: Term Deposit.

Owner: Mr. Suresh Chintamaneni. Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

**5. KINNERSANI CUP (1,400M): ROLLS ROYCE** (Abhay Singh) 1, Glorious Power (Afroz K) 2, Gold Giver (Md. Ekram) 3 and Pride Aside (B. Nikhil) 4. Not run: Colt Pistol and Miss Marvellous. 2-1/2, Neck and 2. 1m, 25.87s. ₹124 (w), 21, 21 and 19 (p). SHP: 65, THP: 39, FP: 1,968, Q: 538, Tanala: 13, 868. Favourite: Miss Smiley Angel. Owners: M.A.M. Ramaswamy Chettiar Of Chettinad Charitable Trust. Trainer: K. Satheesh.

**6. BOLD VENTURE PLATE (DIV. I) (1,200M): ASHOKA** (Mukesh K) 1, Mikimoto (B. Nikhil) 2, Calista Girl (Kuldeep Jr.) 3 and Encore (Nakhat) 4. 1, 3 and 1-1/2. 1m, 12.06s. ₹35 (w), 18, 18 and 36 (p). SHP: 31, THP: 90, FP: 149, Q: 86, Tanala: 1,299. Favourite: Lashka.

Owners: M/s. Prabhakar Chowdary Tripuraneni, Rama Seshu Eyunni, Donald Anthony Netto & Tripuranenivenkata Aditya Chowdary. Trainer: D. Netto.

**7. PEDDAPALLI PLATE (1,200M): CAPE MAY** (Md. Ekram Alam) 1, Swiss Girl (Mukesh K) 2, Clarity (Kuldeep Sr.) 3 and Glimmer Of Hope (Gaurav) 4. 2, 1/2 and 4. 1m, 14.01s. ₹58 (w), 13, 14 and 12 (p). SHP: 26, THP: 46, FP: 276, Q: 95, Tanala: 596. Favourite: Clarity. Owner: Mr. M. Ramakrishna Reddy. Trainer: L. D'Silva.

Jackpot: 70%: ₹1,32,847 (2 tkts.) & 30%: 5,422 (21 tkts.).

Mini Jackpot: (i) 2,364 (15 tkts.), (ii) 18,473 (4 tkts.).

Treble: (i) 856 (25 tkts.), (ii) 5,791 (5 tkts.).

### LIVE TELECAST

**NZ vs Eng**: 2nd T20I, Sony Sports Ten 1 (SD & HD) & LIV, 11.45 a.m.

**Women's ODI World Cup:** Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar. 3 p.m.

**On Tuesday**

**Women's ODI World Cup:** Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar. 3 p.m.

**PKL**: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar. 7.30 p.m.

**Champions League:** Sony Sports Ten 2 (SD & HD) & LIV, 10.15 p.m.; Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Wed).

MILESTONE

## Deepti the second Indian after Jhulan to claim 150 ODI wickets

R.V. MOORTHY

Deepti Sharma (153) became the second Indian woman to reach the 150-wicket mark in ODIs after Jhulan Goswami (255). She achieved the feat in just 116 innings while Jhulan took 128. Deepti is the fourth woman to score 2000 runs and claim 50 wickets in the ODI format after Ellyse Perry, Stafanie Taylor and Marizanne Kapp.

HEARTBREAKING

## Smriti's wicket was a turning point: Harmanpreet after narrow defeat

R.V. MOORTHY

Smriti's wicket was a turning point, but I still think we had too many batters. I don't know how things went the other way, but credit goes to England. They kept getting wickets. It's definitely a heartbreaking moment. The next game is very important for us and hopefully we'll cross the line — India captain Harmanpreet Kaur.

DUBIOUS RECORD

## Gill is second India captain to lose first match in all three formats

AFP

Shubman Gill has become the second India captain after Virat Kohli to lose his first match in all three formats. India went down to Australia in the first ODI on Sunday. Gill began his international captaincy with a defeat to Zimbabwe in a T20I in 2024. India also lost to England in his opening Test in charge of the team in June.

PLAYING CATCH UP

## Never easy when you lose three wickets in the PowerPlay: Gill

AFP

Never easy, when you lose three wickets in the PowerPlay, you're always trying to play catch up. There were a lot of learnings and positives as well. Defending 130 in 26 overs, we took the game pretty deep so we're satisfied with that — India captain Shubman Gill after the seven-wicket loss to Australia.

# Knight and Sciver-Brunt star as England edges India, enters semis

The former skipper puts on 113 runs for the third wicket with her successor; captain Harmanpreet and her deputy Smriti fail to take the host home despite being well-set in a big chase; Deepti's all-round show in vain for the Women in Blue

ODI WORLD CUP

**Anirudh Velamuri**
INDORE

For 48 overs of the chase in the Women's World Cup fixture at the Holkar Stadium here on Sunday, India had every reason to believe the two points belonged in its kitty.

Chasing a target of 289, Smriti Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur stitched a 125-run stand, after which Deepti Sharma joined forces with the former to set up what looked like a comfortable victory.

But somewhere, it all went horribly wrong.

Smriti and Deepti played tired aerial shots, aiming to maintain the high energy of the chase, to no avail.

The home team's saviours against Sri Lanka – Amanjot Kar and Sneh Rana – could not replicate their heroics, with the Indian dugout and Indore stunned to silence in the matter of 12 deliveries.

**Masterclass:** Knight used the sweep shots — traditional, reverse and slog — to good effect to unsettle the Indian spinners. R.V. MOORTHY

SCOREBOARD

**ENGLAND**

Tammy Beaumont b Deepti 22 *(43b, 2x4)*, Amy Jones c Smriti b Deepti 56 *(68b, 8x4)*, Heather Knight run out 109 *(91b, 15x4, 1x6)*, Nat Sciver-Brunt c Harmanpreet b Shree Charani 38 *(49b, 4x4)*, Sophia Dunkley c Deepti b Shree Charani 15 *(21b, 1x4)*, Emma Lamb c Smriti b Deepti 11 *(10b, 1x4)*, Alice Capsey c Harleen b Deepti 2 *(3b)*, Charlie Dean (not out) 19 *(13b, 2x4)*, Sophie Ecclestone run out 3 *(3b)*, Linsey Smith (not out) 0 *(0b)*; Extras (lb-4, nb-1, w-8): 13; Total (for eight wkts. in 50 overs): 288.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-73 (Beaumont, 15.6 overs), 2-98 (Jones, 21.1), 3-211 (Sciver-Brunt, 38.5), 4-249 (Knight, 44.3), 5-254 (Dunkley, 45.5), 6-257 (Capsey, 46.3), 7-276 (Lamb, 48.5), 8-280 (Ecclestone, 49.4).

**INDIA BOWLING**

Renuka 8-0-37-0, Kranti 8-0-46-0, Sneh 10-0-56-0, Shree Charani 10-0-68-2, Deepti 10-0-51-4, Amanjot 4-0-26-0.

**INDIA**

Pratika Rawal c Jones b Bell 6 *(14b, 1x4)*, Smriti Mandhana c Capsey b Smith 88 *(94b, 8x4)*, Harleen Deol lbw b Dean 24 *(31b, 5x4)*, Harmanpreet Kaur c Lamb b Sciver-Brunt 70 *(70b, 10x4)*, Deepti Sharma c Dunkley b Ecclestone 50 *(57b, 5x4)*, Richa Ghosh c Knight b Sciver-Brunt 8 *(10b)*, Amanjot Kaur (not out) 18 *(15b, 2x4)*, Sneh Rana (not out) 10 *(9b, 1x4)*; Extras (w-10): 10; Total (for six wkts. in 50 overs): 284.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-13 (Pratika, 2.6), 2-42 (Harleen, 9.6), 3-167 (Harmanpreet, 30.2), 4-234 (Smriti, 41.2), 5-256 (Richa, 45.4), 6-262 (Deepti, 46.5).

**ENGLAND BOWLING**

Bell 9-0-52-1, Smith 10-0-40-1, Sciver-Brunt 8-0-47-2, Dean 10-0-67-1, Ecclestone 10-0-58-1, Capsey 3-0-20-0.

**Toss:** England; **PoM:** Knight.
*England won by four runs.*
**India's next match: Oct. 23** vs. New Zealand, Navi Mumbai, 3 p.m.

### Points table

| | M | W | L | NR | PTS | NRR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Australia (Q) | 5 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 1.818 |
| England (Q) | 5 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 1.490 |
| South Africa (Q) | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 8 | -0.440 |
| India | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 0.526 |
| New Zealand | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | -0.245 |
| Bangladesh | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 2 | -0.676 |
| Sri Lanka | 5 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 2 | -1.564 |
| Pakistan | 5 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 2 | -1.887 |

Q: Qualified

### Persistence pays off

Nat Sciver-Brunt and Co. never lost hope, and their persistence was rewarded with a narrow four-run victory and a spot in the semifinals alongside Australia and South Africa.

Match-ups didn't work, the pitch didn't produce prodigious turn, and the English line-up was tested to its limits, but the unit scrambled its way to a hard-fought win.

### Setting the platform

She might not be the captain anymore, but yet again, Heather Knight led from the front to set the platform for England with a scintillating hundred, her third in the format.

She combined with her successor Sciver-Brunt, the duo's 113-run stand for the third wicket forming the backbone of the English essay. India was valiant in the field, taking some stellar catches in the circle.

### Third ton

But Knight remained unfazed and brought up her third ODI ton, her celebration more a sigh of relief.

In the end, lax running was her undoing, her dismissal first drawing loud cheers and then a standing ovation from the partisan crowd.

Much like India's would later, the lower middle-order folded and England ceded control.

But luck favoured a brave English side as it snatched victory from the jaws of defeat.

It was the first time since 1982 that India had lost three matches in a row in the mega event.

### Virtual quarterfinal

The home side next meets New Zealand in a virtual quarterfinal on Thursday.

**Sound of timber:** Kuhnemann disturbs Washington's stumps in a decisive spell that restricted India. AFP

# Australia powers past India in rain-affected opening ODI

INDIA IN AUSTRALIA

**Press Trust of India**
PERTH

The grand comeback party of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma had a quick 22-ball end, and the duo's low-key outing reflected in India's seven-wicket defeat against Australia in the rain-affected first ODI on Sunday.

Asked to bat first, India laboured to a sub-par 136 for nine, after the match was revised to 26 overs for a side courtesy several rain interruptions, leaving the host to chase a DLS target of 131, which it duly reached in 21.1 overs.

Skipper Mitchell Marsh (46 not out, 52 balls) used his brute power to keep Australia ahead of the curve with a crucial 55-run partnership with Josh Philippe (37, 29b).

Earlier, India was robbed of the momentum by the constant weather interventions and relentless Australian new-ball bowlers, except when K.L. Rahul (38, 30 balls) was in the middle. India found its wheels moving through a 39-run fifth-wicket alliance between Axar Patel (31) and Rahul before the former fell to spinner Kuhnemann. Rahul and Washington Sundar added 30 runs for the sixth wicket.

But the late flurry of wickets affected India's acceleration in the back-end before Australia cantered to a victory.

SCOREBOARD

**INDIA**

Rohit Sharma c Renshaw b Hazlewood 8 *(14b, 1x4)*, Shubman Gill c Philippe b Ellis 10 *(18b, 2x4)*, Virat Kohli c Connolly b Starc 0 *(8b)*, Shreyas Iyer c Philippe b Hazlewood 11 *(24b, 1x4)*, Axar Patel c Renshaw b Kuhnemann 31 *(38b, 3x4)*, K.L. Rahul c Renshaw b Owen 38 *(31b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Washington Sundar b Kuhnemann 10 *(10b, 1x4)*, Nitish Kumar (not out) 19 *(11b, 2x6)*, Harshit Rana c Philippe b Owen 1 *(2b)*, Arshdeep Singh run out 0 *(0b)*, Mohammed Siraj (not out) 0 *(0b)*; Extras (lb-2, w-6): 8; Total (for nine wkts. in 26 overs): 136.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-13 (Rohit, 3.4 overs), 2-21 (Kohli, 6.1), 3-25 (Gill, 8.1), 4-45 (Shreyas, 13.2), 5-84 (Axar, 19.6), 6-115 (Washington, 23.3), 7-121 (Rahul, 24.3), 8-123 (Harshit, 24.6), 9-124 (Arshdeep, 25.2).

**AUSTRALIA BOWLING**

Starc 6-1-22-1, Hazlewood 7-2-20-2, Ellis 5-1-29-1, Owen 3-0-20-2, Kuhnemann 4-0-26-2, Short 1-0-17-0.

**AUSTRALIA**

Mitchell Marsh (not out) 46 *(52b, 2x4, 3x6)*, Travis Head c Harshit b Arshdeep 8 *(5b, 2x4)*, Matthew Short c Rohit b Axar 8 *(17b, 1x4)*, Josh Philippe c Arshdeep b Washington 37 *(29b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Matt Renshaw (not out) 21 *(24b, 1x4, 1x6)*; Extras (lb-3, w-8): 11; Total (for three wkts. in 21.1 overs): 131.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-10 (Head, 1.2), 2-44 (Short, 7.5), 3-99 (Philippe, 15.2).

**INDIA BOWLING**

Siraj 4-1-21-0, Arshdeep 5-0-31-1, Harshit 4-0-27-0, Axar 4-0-19-1, Nitish 2.1-0-16-0, Washington 2-0-14-1.

**Toss:** Australia; **PoM:** Marsh.
*Australia won by seven wickets with 29 balls remaining (DLS Method) to lead three-match series 1-0.*
**Second ODI: Oct. 23**, Adelaide, 9 a.m. IST.

# Bangladesh, Sri Lanka look to bring their A-game

**Shayan Acharya**
NAVI MUMBAI

On paper, it's a clash between the sixth and seventh placed teams. But ahead of its group league fixture against Sri Lanka on Monday, Bangladesh fast bowler Fahima Khatun appeared confident about her team's chances of making it to the semifinals of the Women's ODI World Cup. But then, it's easier said than done.

Despite showing resilience, Bangladesh could register a solitary win, and now, to keep its hopes alive, it needs to win the remaining two matches - against Sri Lanka and India - and then hope for England to beat New Zealand and India.

**Morale-booster:** The returning top-order batter Vishmi will be crucial to Sri Lanka's batting fortunes. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Sri Lanka, on the other hand, was robbed of the home advantage as two of its home games in Colombo were abandoned due to rain. Some insipid performances added to its woes as the team could never rise to the occasion, and now, even though, mathematically it can still qualify for the last-four stage, the reality speaks otherwise.

"There is a bit of mathematics, but for now, we are thinking of winning tomorrow's game first," said Sri Lanka's head coach Rumesh Ratnayake.

As the DY Patil Stadium hosts its first game of the tournament, Ratnayake expects it to be a 'typical Mumbai wicket' which could aid the batters. However, both teams would be hoping to be more consistent with its batting and improve the fielding standards. While Bangladesh fast bowler Marufa Akter, who suffered a back strain, will be available for selection, Sri Lanka will also be boosted by the return of its top-order batter Vishmi Gunarathne.

### Monday's Match

Navi Mumbai, 3 p.m.

H2H IN ODIs

Played: 3

Sri Lanka 2 | Bangladesh 0

No Result 1

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIOHOTSTAR

### Tuesday's Match

Colombo, 3 p.m.

H2H IN ODIs

Played: 31

South Africa 23 | Pakistan 6

No Result 1 | Tied 1

IN WORLD CUPS

Played: 4

South Africa 4 | Pakistan 0

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIOHOTSTAR

# Manchester United ends long wait for a win at Liverpool

EURO LEAGUES

**Agence France-Presse**
LIVERPOOL

Liverpool slumped to a fourth consecutive defeat for the first time in 11 years as Manchester United won 2-1 on Sunday to end its near decade-long wait for victory at Anfield.

Harry Maguire's 84th minute header secured back-to-back Premier League wins for the first time in Ruben Amorim's tenure as United boss.

Twelve minutes from time, Cody Gakpo had cancelled out Bryan Mbeumo's opener after just 61 seconds. United closes to within two points of its historic rival and up to ninth in the table to ease the pressure on Amorim after his biggest win in nearly a year in charge.

**Lightning quick:** United's Mbeumo gets on the scoresheet in the 61st second to peg back Liverpool. REUTERS

Inter Milan moved top of Serie A on goal difference on Saturday after winning 1-0 at Roma.

**The results: Premier League:** Tottenham 1 (Bentancur 5) lost to Aston Villa 2 (Rogers 37, Buendia 77); Liverpool 1 (Gakpo 78) lost to Manchester United 2 (Mbeumo 2, Maguire 84).

**Serie A:** Como 2 (Kempf 4, Paz 78) bt Juventus 0; Cagliari 0 lost to Bologna 2 (Holm 31, Orsolini 80).

**Bundesliga:** St Pauli 0 lost to Hoffenheim 3 (Toure 54, Kramaric 59, Proemel 79); Freiburg 2 (Scherhant 2, Grifo 87) drew with Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Burkardt 18, 38).

**On Saturday: LaLiga:** Atletico Madrid 1 (Almada 69) bt Osasuna 0.

**Serie A:** Roma 0 lost to Inter Milan 1 (Bonny 6).

# Phichitpreechasak wins as Tanvi falls at the final hurdle

The host finishes the tournament with two medals; the top seed becomes just the third Indian woman medallist after Aparna (silver in 1996) and Saina (silver in 2006 and gold in 2008)

BADMINTON

**Nihit Sachdeva**
GUWAHATI

**Balletic movement:** Phichitpreechasak trumped Tanvi with her wristy play. RITU RAJ KONWAR

Around 2 p.m. here on Sunday, India's Tanvi Sharma and Thailand's Anyapat Phichitpreechasak started warming up on adjacent practice courts at the National Centre of Excellence, ahead of their World junior badminton championships final.

Tanvi, looking to become only the second Indian ever after Saina Nehwal (Pune, 2008) to win gold, stayed focused on her stretching and drills while also receiving high-fives from teammates and blessings from various host officials.

For Phichitpreechasak, there were no such interruptions.

One-and-a-half hours later, face to face on the Centre Court, the second seed silenced a near-capacity crowd as she clinically defeated the top-seeded Indian 15-7, 15-12 in 28 minutes. Phichitpreechasak is the third Thai girl after Ratchanok Intanon (2009-11) and Pitchamon Opatniput (2023) to clinch the title.

The 17-year-old Phichitpreechasak's wristy play and balletic movement didn't allow Tanvi's deceptive game to work its magic.

"She was reading well. I was hitting many deceptive shots, but she knew where I was hitting," said Tanvi, the third Indian woman medallist after Aparna Popat (silver in 1996) and Saina (silver in 2006 and gold in 2008).

### Seven straight points

After a close start in the opener, Phichitpreechasak won seven straight points to take a 13-5 lead. Her net play and timely drop shots troubled the Indian.

In the second game, the teenager from Hoshiarpur even tried the short serve, as opposed to her usual toss one, indicating the need to find something her Thai opponent wasn't expecting.

Tanvi led 6-1 in the second game, but Phichitpreechasak forced an impressive comeback to level the score 8-8 and didn't look back.

Tanvi... bittersweet. RITU RAJ KONWAR

China's Liu Yang Ming Yu, coached by former Olympic and World Champion Chen Long, took down top-seeded Indonesian Mohd. Zaki Ubaidillah 15-10, 15-11 to win the boys' singles title.

India, which hosted the World junior championships after 17 years, finished with two medals - a historic first-ever bronze in the team event and Tanvi's silver in girls' singles.

**The results (final): Singles: Girls:** Anyapat Phichitpreechasak (Tha) bt Tanvi Sharma 15-7, 15-12; **Boys:** Liu Yang Ming Yu (Chn) bt Mohd. Zaki Ubaidillah (Idn) 15-10, 15-11.
**Doubles: Girls:** Tan Ke Xuan & Wei Yue Yue (Chn) bt Zi Yu Low & Noraqilah Maisarah (Mas) 15-13, 19-17; **Boys:** Chen Jun Ting & Liu Jun Rong (Chn) bt Cho Hyeong Woo & Hyeong Woo Lee (Kor) 16-14, 15-12; **Mixed:** Lee Hyeong Woo & Cheon Hye In (Kor) bt Hung Bing Fu & Chou Yun An (Tpe) 15-9, 11-15, 15-10.

**All smiles:** Fleetwood shows off his winnings after beating back the challenge from Nakajima. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

# Fleetwood holds his nerve for title

GOLF

**Uthra Ganesan**
NEW DELHI

Tommy Fleetwood ensured there would be no final day jitters, marking a memorable return to India and the Delhi Golf Club as the maiden winner of the inaugural DP World India Championship on Sunday.

Fleetwood carded a 65 in the final round for a 21-under par for the tournament, two shots clear of overnight leader Keita Nakajima – winner of the Indian Open in 2024 and runner-up this year – who finished 19-under with a 69 on Sunday.

The Englishman, second at the end of Day Three two shots behind Nakajima, played an aggressive hand from the beginning and, despite dropping a shot on the second hole, did not let up on his chase of the top.

It was a high risk-high reward strategy, but the gamble paid off. Fleetwood sank five birdies on the front nine and four consecutive from the seventh to 10th holes to share the lead, then added two more on the 14th and 17th.

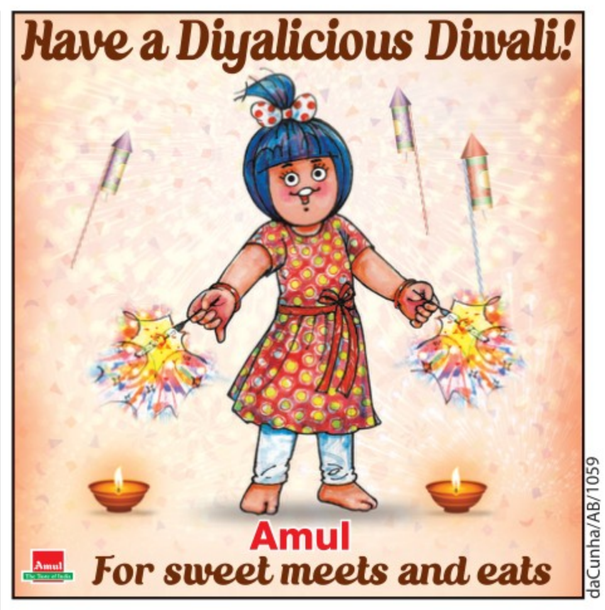
But both trailed New Zealand's Daniel Hillier, the surprise leader at that point. Hillier, who started four behind the leader, was on fire in the front nine, gaining six shots including four consecutive birdies.

Just when it looked like he could do no wrong, Hillier hit his 14th tee deep into the bushes, impossible to hit out of. He took the penalty and dropped a shot, then missed an easy putt for a double bogey and could never recover, finishing six shots behind the winner.

Fleetwood and Nakajima stayed close, with the Japanese pushing hard all the way. But Fleetwood kept calm and extended his slender lead with a massive birdie on the 14th for a four-day total of 266.

Rory McIlroy, however, had his worst round of the week, carding 71 to finish tied-26th.

**Final scores: 266:** Tommy Fleetwood (68-64-69-65); **268:** Keita Nakajima (65-69-65-69); **270:** Shane Lowry (64-69-69-68), Alex Fitzpatrick (69-67-67), Thriston Lawrence (69-67-69-65).




## SNAPSHOTS

### Titans beat Giants

NEW DELHI: Telugu Titans held its nerve in the final quarter to overcome Gujarat Giants 30-25 in a see-saw contest in the Pro Kabaddi League at the Thyagaraj Indoor Stadium on Sunday. The contest saw both teams matching each other point for point and the teams were 6-6 at the 10th minute mark and the scores were level once again at 11-11 at the end of 20 minutes. With both teams not giving an inch, the score was again locked at 17-17 when the clock hit the 30-minute mark. The decisive moment came when the Titans' defence produced a superb effort to inflict an 'All Out' to swing the momentum in their favour. Though Giants fought back, Titans defence closed ranks. In the end, Titans' resilience and all-round execution helped them prevail with a five-point cushion.

### Guardians pip Toofans

HYDERABAD: Goa Guardians beat Delhi Toofans 3-2 in a Pro Volleyball League match at the G.M.C. Balayogi Indoor Stadium on Sunday.

Fernandez. AFP

### Fernandez clinches his maiden win in MotoGP

PHILLIP ISLAND: Spain's Raul Fernandez surged to a maiden MotoGP victory in Australia on Sunday while Alex Marquez finished fourth to shore up his bid to finish the season second in the World championship. The Aprilia rider benefited from two long lap penalties served by a flying Marco Bezzecchi to take the chequered flag 1.418s clear of Ducati's Fabio Di Giannantonio. Aprilia's Bezzecchi, who won the 13-lap sprint on Saturday, came third.

# Maharaj set to return for Proteas

SA IN PAKISTAN

**Associated Press**
RAWALPINDI

**Welcome return:** Maharaj will bolster SA's spin resources. AFP

World Test champion South Africa will rely heavily on its fit-again spinner Keshav Maharaj to level the two-Test series against Pakistan as yet another dry pitch is prepared for the second Test, starting on Monday.

Pakistan notched an emphatic 93-run victory inside four days on a turning wicket in Lahore with left-arm spinner Noman Ali bagging a match-haul of 11 wickets.

Maharaj missed out on the first Test because he was recovering from a groin injury back home, but his return will bolster South Africa's inexperienced spin resources.

A dry surface could encourage Pakistan to include leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed as a third specialist slow bowler to team up with Noman and Khan.

# Railways escapes with a draw against Karnataka

**Sports Bureau**
BENGALURU

Abhishek Kaushal (102, 202b, 8x4, 3x6) and Virat Jaiswal (108 n.o., 223b, 21x4, 1x6) saved Railways' blushes as their side managed to salvage a single point from the drawn C.K. Nayudu (U-23) Trophy encounter versus Karnataka at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Sunday.

**The scores:**
Karnataka 529/7 decl. in 135.4 overs drew with Railways 186 in 81 overs & 339/9 in 111 overs (Anchit Yadav 47, Abhishek Kaushal 102, Virat Jaiswal 108 n.o., Hardik Raj 6/87).

# Legendary horse trainer Padmanabhan passes away

**Vinayak M. Zodge**

**Winning combination:** Padmanabhan leading in his champion horse Desert God (David Allan astride) which brought him glory in the Indian Derby and Invitation Cup. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Indian horse racing fraternity bid goodbye to one of its most brilliant trainers, S. Padmanabhan, popularly known as Paddy, who passed away on Sunday at Bengaluru. He was 71 and is survived by wife Sharmila Padmanabhan, who was a pillar of support.

Padmanabhan, who began his career in 1981 after obtaining the licence from the Madras Race Club, started training in Chennai and later moved his base to the Bangalore Turf Club.

Over a career spanning more than four decades, Padmanabhan sent out over 1,000 winners, including an exceptional 113 Classic victories and nearly 200 Graded race wins. Among the remarkable achievements were three Indian Derby triumphs and five Indian Turf Invitation Cup wins which cemented his place as a legendary figure in the sport.

His first Derby victory came in 2012 with the brilliant filly In The Spotlight, followed by Desert God in 2016 and Hall Of Famer in 2017. In the Indian Turf Invitation Cup, he saddled five champions – Running Flame (1999), Zurbaran (2003), Becket (2010), In The Spotlight (2012), and Desert God (2016).

Incidentally, the champion horse Desert God, considered the highest stake-earning racehorse in Indian history, was bred, owned, and trained by Padmanabhan.

Padmanabhan, one of the most well-known Indian racing figures internationally, closely followed global trends and studied pedigrees which helped him excel in every area of the sport. Known for his sharp judgment, he also had a special talent for selecting the right horses.